Wm Halsted

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

DEVOTED TO CHOICE LITERATURE, ROMANCE, THE NEWS AND COMMERCE

VOL. XVIII. ROBERT BONNER, PUBLISHER, 40 PARK ROW. NEW YORK, APRIL 12, 1862. TERMS, $2 PER ANNUM, IN ADVANCE. NO. 6.

SEA-MOSSES.

BY MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

Unchanging flowers are we,
Babes of the billowy main,
No nursing care we knew,
Bright sun, nor balmy dew,
Nor genial rain.

Earth calls her blossoms forth
'Neath Spring or Summer's ray,
Yet while with joyous zest
Ye wreathe them round your breast
They fall away.

In our sequestered cells
We wake no mourner's sigh,
Old Ocean's children dear
We never cause a tear
To mortal eye,—

But unimpair'd and fresh
Our brilliance keep,
Unaw'd by blasts that blow,
Unreach'd by wintry snow,
Though tempests sweep.

Oh, fair young hands that drew
Us from our secret glade,
Be sedulous to sow
Those sweet heart-flowers that glow
Never to fade.

Hartford, January, 1862.

VENDETTA;
OR,
THE OUTLAW'S BRIDE.

A TALE OF CORSICA.

BY ELIZA A. DUPUY,

AUTHOR OF "THE WHITE TERROR," "THE MYSTERIOUS MARRIAGE," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER I.

What quality is there in the air of mountain lands which renders their sons unconquerable? Look over the history of the civilized world, and we find that men who breathe a highland atmosphere are chainless as the eagle that dwells among their native hills. "God and freedom" are their watchwords, and the great Jehovah has never failed to smile upon those who do battle for the sacred rights of man.

There is a small sea-girt island on which this struggle has been long and arduous; in which the blood-vengeance has cursed the soil, yet among whose people the idea of constitutional liberty was acted on before Washington fought for his country's rights; before France waded through seas of blood to the phantom of freedom she now enjoys.

Corsica is little known except as the birthplace of Napoleon, yet it was there that Pasquale Paoli lived, fought, and legislated so wisely, that with a little foreign aid he might have won lasting independence as the heritage of his countrymen. Such aid was not granted, and Paoli died an exile in a foreign land, but not the less revered as a patriot and a statesman because circumstances were against him. Worthy to be ranked with Washington, Paoli stands out among the sons of men as a fettered giant, struggling with almost superhuman power to break the shackles that bind the land of his birth. That he failed was not due to himself, but to those who looked on with silent sympathy, yet forbore to stretch forth a helping hand to aid the noblest struggle against fearful odds that ever has been waged.

It is to that island lying upon the blue bosom of the Mediterranean that our story leads us, and the stranger who feels the soft voluptuous air floating around him, who gazes in silent rapture upon the enchanting scenery, would scarcely dream that amid such Eden loveliness can lurk the demons of hate, despair, and death.

The crimson gleam of the setting sun is melting slowly into the purple twilight, and the azure sky begins to sparkle with stars, while the yellow disc of the full moon slowly rises as from the waves of the undulating sea stretching out in the distance.

Three lofty mountains approach the shore, covered with olive groves, and villages nestled amid their shades. As the brilliant glare of day fades into twilight, the fires of the shepherds, who dwell amid the alpine fastnesses, gleam with ruddy hues from point to point on the abrupt declivities.

The names of these mountains are Angiola, Santa Susannah, and Monte Felicetà; at their base lies the town of Isola Rossa, founded by Paoli. To the right lies the peninsula of Cape Corso, the most northern point of the island, and on the left is a long projecting tongue of land, around which the sea sweeps in tranquil murmurs.

The town, with its small houess, flat roofs, and green window shutters, its wealth of shade, and its neat church, with snow-white towers, is a most picturesque and cheerful looking place.

In the sea are three red rocks over which an old tower keeps watch, carrying back the fancy to those days in which the sword of the Saracen brought terror and death to the dwellers in this lovely region.

At the entrance of the city is a spacious square, in the middle of which is a fountain surmounted by a marble bust of Paoli. This spot is the common resort of the inhabitants in the evenings, and many groups were now collected beneath the ornamental trees that cast their umbrage over the emerald sward.

A group of children had erected a cross, around which they were dancing with clasped hands, and singing with melodious voices the revolutionary song of France, the Marseillaise,—on the opposite side of the square a group gathered around a young girl who touched a guitar with much skill, and sang the national airs of Corsica; these vocaros are either tender laments for the loss of a beloved one, or wild, terrible songs of vengeance. They are mostly composed by women, yet the horrible and the terrible are only veiled by the melancholy beauty thrown around them. They are mere improvisations, extended at pleasure by the performer, and alternately express the tenderest emotions, or the highest state of excitement, according to the skill of the singer.

[ENTERED ACCORDING TO ACT OF CONGRESS, IN THE YEAR 1862 BY ROBERT BONNER IN THE CLERK'S OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK.]

CLARICE AND MARIE IN CONSULTATION.

The woman, who held the guitar with careless grace, was young and attractive in person, though an expression of melancholy abstraction characterized her features. She was above the medium height, with a figure of lithe and graceful proportions, hands and feet of remarkable symmetry, and a face of such varying expression as would have rendered it interesting even had it been far plainer than hers was. But her features were of that regular southern type in which beauty of proportion and delicacy of coloring are transcended by the passionate power which breathes in every line—vibrates in every thrilling tone, is read in every tremulous motion of the flexible lips, in the sweep of the heavily-fringed lids which veil large, black, melancholy eyes that reveal a tale of suffering of no common stamp.

Her dress was of dark blue material, of better quality than that usually worn by the peasantry; this was set off by a few gold ornaments, and the mandile, or head-handkerchief, which was coiled around her head, was of such brilliant hues as harmonized with her dark and striking style of beauty. Her long, glossy black hair had escaped from its confinement, and fell in waves of jet almost to her feet, as she stood with her guitar slung across her breast by a broad scarlet ribbon; with accurate touch she struck the chords, which formed a wild accompaniment to the tones of her flexible voice, and the monotonous rhythm was calculated to produce a deep and melancholy effect upon her hearers.

Suddenly a voice spoke beside her.

"Marie Montoni, change your measure, for here comes the bridal party, and Baptisto Matra will not be likely to give a liberal douceur to one who meets him with a lament on such an occasion as this."

"True," replied Marie, vaguely, "Matra must have an epithalamium. I promised that I would compose one expressly for him, for he weds with the Pearl of Isola Rossa, the beautiful Clarice, who is my best friend."

"See that you give it pretty soon, for here they come—the old woman, the brother, sister and bridegroom—but the pretty bride is missing. I say that is shabby, now, for Clarice to refuse to come out on the eve of her bridal."

"And I say it is all right," said another. "Clarice is a lady, though she is the daughter of a peasant, and she has the whims of one. Luckily Matra has the money to uphold her in her fantasies, and that's why she's took up with him I fancy, for he isn't the handsomest man in these parts."

"Hush—h, they are close upon us. Matra has a long arm, and will not forgive an insult."

As the party thus referred to drew near, the improvisatrice changed her song of vengeance for one of love and triumph. She sang of the happiness and good fortune of the successful wooer, of the days of joy about to dawn upon him, of the pride with which the family of the bride elect would bestow upon the fortunate suitor the hand of the fairest girl in all the island.

With folded hands and placid brow, the bridegroom listened to his own praises so eloquently sung. He was a heavy, stoutly built man of fifty, with a low, retreating forehead, and a sensual mouth. There was nothing to attract the love of a young, fair girl in that repulsive face, but his dress showed that his position was better than that of most of the people who clustered around him. He wore the finest cloth, ornamented with embroidery, and a heavy chain of gold glittered upon his scarlet vest.

A large, middle-aged woman, dressed in the peasant costume, accompanied Matra, and behind them came a boy and girl of fourteen and sixteen years of age. If the Pearl of Isola Rossa was as beautiful as her friends declared her to be, she was singularly unlike her relatives, for the heavy, sallow features, and small, bead-like eyes of Senora Marcante had been transmitted to her offspring with singular fidelity, and the most partial critic could not have pronounced either of the three moderately good-looking. However, they were dressed in their best clothes, and were perfectly satisfied with the impression they believed they were making. Many congratulations were offe[illegible] to the bridegroom, and also to the fortunate mother who had succeeded in winning the [illegible]rader for her son-in-law; but above all, the strains of music rang out their joyous peal, and but one among the listeners bore a discontented and bitter heart as he hearkened to the bridal hymn.

This was a young man of three or four and twenty, wearing the dress of a fisherman, with the Phrygian cap placed jauntily upon his curling black hair. His figure was tall, well knit, and elastic, and his features had that mingled expression of boldness and tenderness which evinces a fine and noble nature; yet there was a latent gleam of fire which betrayed that in a burst of momentary passion, he might be goaded to commit an act fatal to his peace throughout all the days of his after life.

The appearance of Guilio Falcone amid the crowd caused many whispered comments, for it was known to all present that Clarice Marcante had been the love of his boyhood and youth—that for her sake he had refused to become a priest when his patron, Count Rospoli, offered to provide for him handsomely if he would take the vows. When the old nobleman insisted that his patronage should be accepted, Guilio disappeared from the neighborhood, to return after a brief absence as the captain of a lugger, ostensibly engaged in fishing, but it was secretly asserted that she carried on a contraband trade under the protection of a noted smuggler known as Captain Barnardo.

Senora Marcante listened to these stories, and turned scornfully from the young sailor, to smile upon the offers of the rich Matra; Guilio was forbidden to think of Clarice, and magnificent preparations were made for the marriage which was now on the eve of consummation.

This was a severe blow both to the pride and the affections of the young lover; Clarice also had resisted so long as the power to do so remained with her; but Senora Marcante was a wilful and despotic woman in her own household, and when she decided that the marriage should take place, there was no appeal from her authority.

The chosen bridegroom was of the wealthy bourgeois; and he had amassed a fortune by trading with the neighboring coasts of France and Italy. His villa and olive groves were among the most desirable in the vicinity of Isola Rossa, and the mother pronounced Clarice the most fortunate of girls in attracting so desirable a match; but the young girl compared the pompous, heavy Matra with the handsome and spirited young fisherman, and her heart utterly rebelled against the destiny awarded her. The rich lover seemed unconscious of, or indifferent to, her feelings—he thought all women were perverse in such matters, and in time his wife would settle down quietly in the place assigned her; he had no fears as to his power to manage her, for his was a strong hand, and a relentless will.

Senora Marcante sat beside her chosen son-in-law, and listened complacently to the florid epithalamium poured forth by the wandering improvisatrice. She was a dark, keen-eyed woman, who seemed quite capable of using force if her daughter should prove rebellious; and the expression of gratified pride that rested upon her features, showed that she was quite elated by the brilliant future that opened before her family. With unwonted liberality, Matra had pledged himself to advance the interests of Pietro, and to find a marriage portion for the heavy-looking Ninetta, who sat twirling her fingers beside her.

Guilio Falcone drew near the shrewd-looking dame, and while the music rung out its monotonous rhythm, he found means to mutter in her ear:

"Mother Marcante, is it impossible to move yno from your cruel purpose? Will you break my heart, and that of my Clarice? for she is mine—*mine* in the sight of Heaven!"

This impetuous whisper caused the woman to turn her head slightly toward the speaker, and she replied in a low, taunting tone:

"Remember the proverb that belongs to your trade, and act on it, young man. The adage says, there is as good fish in the sea as ever were caught from it; angle for one of them, and leave *my* child for your betters; she shall never marry you, nor such as you."

A flash of lurid anger passed over the face of the young lover, and he disdainfully said, as he nodded toward Matra:

"And *he*, with his mean face, his meaner nature, is considered worthy to win and wear *my* betrothed, because he can claim a little more gold than I possess. Money is good, but it cannot buy heart-love like that between Clarice and me. Oh! Mother Marcante, do not drive us to desperation. Stop this marriage, and let Clarice come to my home, for I have one to offer her. I have labored for her—I have found a nest in which she can be happy, and lo! when I came into the harbor to cast anchor, the news was hurled at me that you were about to give my bride to yonder lump of flesh and stupidity. Is this right? is it just to two young people that are devoted to each other? You do not know what may yet come of all this."

"Guilio," replied the Senora, impressively, "listen to me: You have ever been a wild and wayward youth, but I do not believe you have in you the stuff that will make a bandit. You have lived upon the sea, and the *macchia** would not agree with you. A week among the fastnesses of the hills would break you down, and make you a prey to your pursuers. I advise you not to attempt anything desperate, because *my* daughter is quite beyond your reach, and will always remain so. If I would not give her to you as a peaceful, well-to-do lad, I would scarcely permit her to follow your fortunes if you dare to invoke the blood vengeance. There! I hope that is plain enough, young man."

At this moment the melody abruptly ceased, and Guilio drew away, muttering some unintelligible words, which were drowned in the vociferous applause which greeted the musician.

Matra spoke in loud, pompous tones:

"Well done, Marie; I am charmed with your bridal song, and since you have praised me so judiciously, I will double the compensation I intended to give you."

A faint smile, half scornful in its meaning, passed over the lips of the improvisatrice, as she held out her hand for the promised guerdon, and she briefly said:

"My service is performed, and I must be gone before the sun rises on your wedding day. I sing of marriages, but they are not in my line. The scathed heart has nothing to do with love and joy, though the lips may sing of its fullness. The hopes crushed out in blood may never blossom again."

She spoke in a vague, half dreamy manner, and her eyes were fixed upon the distant sea, over whose restless waters the moon was now pouring a flood of yellow radiance.

"Poor Marie," was muttered by those around her. "Her's was indeed a tragic history—so young, so fair, yet so unfortunate!"

Matra drew forth a small gold coin, and placed it in the outstretched palm of the singer.

"I am told that you also possess the power of divination. Read me my fate, good Marie, and keep the gold unchanged."

He held forth his fat, white hand, which looked clammy and cold. The girl glanced upon the lines traced within its palm, shuddered, and tendered him back the coin.

"I know nothing of palmistry," she said. "Take back your gold, and give me such guerdon as my song has merited."

"Nay, nay, keep it, fair Marie, though I should be glad to have you read my future."

"Why should you ask it?" she vaguely replied. "Are you not a successful man in all your undertakings? Fortune smiles on you, and love offers its crown to your life; what more dare you ask of Fate than has already been granted you? Why seek to lift the veil from the future, when the bright sunshine is upon the present? Better bask in its warm beams, and pray to the holy virgin that it may never be worse with you than now."

"She speaks words of wisdom," said Senora Marcante, "and the priest says it is sinful to pry into the ways of Providence. Enjoy the good that is sent us, bear the evil when it falls; that is the true philosophy of life."

The dark eyes of the improvisatrice were fixed upon the speaker, with an expression of intense sadness, and she spoke with inexpressible bitterness.

"Life has no other philosophy than *endurance*. What God sends to his creatures they *must* bear, and that is an end of the matter. Mother Marcante, can I find shelter beneath your roof a few hours to-night. I promised Clarice to see her once more before I leave the town, and I must see her without delay."

The old woman regarded her with an expression of suspicion, while she slowly said:

"No one willingly turns away the smitten of God, and you are welcome to the shelter of my roof, Marie Montoni, if you are true to me and mine."

"True to the best interests of your daughter you will ever find me," replied Marie, composedly. "Why should you now doubt my devotion to her, good mother?"

"If you are true to her *interests*, I can trust you; for they lead her to the altar with Baptisto Matra, to place the nuptial ring upon her finger."

Marie bowed her head as if in assent, and the dame added:

"Then come with me, and talk reasonably with the wayward girl, who will see no grandeur in the future, no joy in the life that opens so fairly before her. Oh! children are vexatious and ungrateful creatures. While parents seek to do the best they can for them, they often try to thwart their efforts for their advancement. It's a weary world, a weary world, in spite of all the angels in Heaven are constantly trying to do for us."

Marie shook her head dubiously as she glanced at the repulsive face of Matra, and muttered:

"I am afraid the angels had little to do with this, but I will talk with Clarice, as you wish me to do. I am afraid we are all too much like the ungrateful children of whom you just now spoke, and we carry out our own will while professing to follow the dictates of Heaven."

Dame Marcante looked sharply at her, but as the speaker seemed wrapped in a species of dreamy trance, in which she appeared scarcely conscious of the purport of her own words, the good woman turned to Matra, and said:

"It grows late, and I have much to attend to to-morrow. It is best to seek my home, and rest before labor. You, too, Senor, will need repose to prepare yourself for the happiness that awaits you. Long life to you, my son, in which to enjoy prosperity with my fortunate daughter."

The bridegroom sleepily returned his thanks for her good wishes, and with some effort arose from the comfortable seat he occupied. He placed himself beside Marie, but she seemed to recoil from him with some inexplicable feeling of repulsion, and glided around the portly form of Senora Marcante till she found Ninetta, whose hand she grasped as her companion in their homeward walk. Grateful for the preference thus shown, the young girl said:

"I will show you my beautiful dress, Marie. Oh, it is grand to have such a fine wedding, and so rich a brother as Senor Matra will be!"

Marie's lip curled, but she absently replied:

"Yes—very grand, Ninetta, if poor Clarice could only think as you do."

"Clarice is so strange. She never does think as mother and I do. Mother says she is too fanciful to belong to any but a rich man, and it must then be right to give her to Matra, even if she does not care particularly for him. Mother says she'll learn to love him in time."

The dark eyes of the listener emitted a flash as they were turned indignantly upon the simple prattler, but the vacant face that met her view caused a sudden revulsion of feeling. She laughed bitterly as she replied:

"Perhaps your mother is right; but in my opinion time will come to an end for us all before Clarice learns the lesson that has been set for her. Poor girl! I wish it were otherwise."

"Then she will prove very perverse," retorted Ninetta, with a pout. "If Matra had given *me* all the beautiful things that he has sent my sister, I should think him the greatest man in the world."

Marie made no reply to this, and the two followed in the steps of the elder couple, while Pietro skipped along in pursuit of the fire-flies that flitted around them. The soft sea breeze moved the foliage of the trees, and the bright moon flooded the bay with a light almost as clear as that of day. The children still sang their wild war chant, and the tinkle of the citera was heard from many different points, as the party pursued their way toward Dame Marcante's humble domicile.

CHAPTER II.

The cottage nestled in a secluded nook near the sandy beach, and within sight of its windows lay the dark hull and tapering masts of Guilio Falcone's bark, making ready to go on another voyage. A pathway from the landing wound upward toward the widow's door, which, until of late, had been familiar to the feet of the handsome fisherman; and the fair Clarice, who on the morrow was to give her hand to Baptiste Matra, had often lingered upon it with her hand clasped in Falcone's, and her eyes beaming with that deep passionate love which both believed to be indestructible.

Now it was seldom trodden by her, for her mother kept too strict a watch upon her movements to permit such wanderings from the path she was resolute her child should walk in.

Clarice was the beauty of Isola Rossa, and when the wealthy Matra was attracted by her fair face, she was allowed no voice in the arrangement which gave her hand to him as his wife. To be elevated to the position of mistress of a villa, with servants and lands, was too great good fortune to be cast away for love forsooth. That was but a dream, while this was a tangible reality, whose blessings would increase and multiply as time rolled on.

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* Forest.

Thus reasoned Senora Marcante, and Clarice listened with a rebellious heart, which shrank and quivered with pain when she thought of her beloved Guilio; of the happy future they had planned together, and she thrilled with repulsion as she compared him with her ungainly bridegroom.

The cottage stood upon a ledge overlooking the sea; it was of humble pretensions, though it was a comfortable home in that genial climate, and was kept with a degree of neatness not often found among people of the widow's class. Fruit trees grew around it, and a vine trailed its green foliage over the walls, making it a complete nest of verdure.

Matra bade the party good night at the base of the ascent, saying that as they were now safe in sight of the door, he would seek his own home, and spare himself the fatigue of going up with them. Senora Marcante replied to this with cordial emphasis:

"It will be best so, my son; adieu till to-morrow, and may the holy Mother of God have you in her keeping. Her blessing upon your union with Clarice is, I believe, already assured."

"I trust so," replied the bridegrooom, as he turned toward his own domicile.

Marie looked after his receding figure, and she scornfully said:

"A lover worth the care of the holy Mary, would have gone on with us for the chance of a moment's interview with the object of his affections. Oh! Mother Marcante, do you hope that Clarice can ever be happy with that ton of flesh yonder? A fish from the sea has as much sensibility as Matra has, and Clarice is all tenderness and truthfulness."

"That may be true, but still I have chosen wisely for her. Clarice is fair and delicate; she is not suited to bear the burden of a hard life. Baptisto can make her a lady in station, as nature has made her one in taste and refinement. Trust me, Marie, that I am doing what in the end will be best for my daughter's happiness."

"I wish I could think so. With one she loves, Clarice would cheerfully bear privations even; but in the case of her new home, her spirit will fret itself forever against the enforced bonds that will bind her to such a man as you are about to bestow her on."

"If such are your sentiments, I think you had better not seek Clarice to-night," said Senora Marcante, drily. "It is too late to preach against the marriage now, for every arrangement is completed, and she shall surely become the wife of Matra on the morrow."

"Clarice has my promise to see her once more before I leave Isola Rossa; but you need fear nothing from me *now*. The fate of your child is already decided, and I shall not lift my finger to change it. Will this assurance satisfy you?"

The woman ungraciously replied:

"I suppose it must, for you are always wilful, and at the last moment, Clarice may prove unmanageable if I keep you away from her. See her, then, and bear from her her last farewell to the presumptuous Guilio, for it is he who will watch for you when you leave my cottage, I very well know. See—I am secure of the game I am playing, or I would never permit this interview between you."

As she ceased speaking, they reached the cottage door, which stood open to receive them. It consisted of a large, central room, with doors on either side opening from it into the apartments of the family.

An iron lamp of antique shape hung from the centre of the ceiling, and in the full glare of the light which fell from it, sat a young girl with her hands clasped upon her lap in an attitude of hopeless dejection.

Her light and graceful figure was clad in a robe of pale sea green, with a jacket of some brilliant figured material, fitted perfectly to her form; her heavy suit of lustrous auburn hair was partially covered by the usual Corsican head-dress, a mandile white as drifted snow, with a border of fine red stripes closely woven together.

Clarice was scarcely seventeen years of age, but her form was rounded into perfect womanhood, and there was a world of passionate thought and feeling in the deep dark eyes and flexible lips of this young creature thus early placed in a position of such pain and peril; for the overbearing mother was far from comprehending the actual condition of her daughter's affairs. She did not see the conflict raging in that bosom between love and duty—the struggle between ambition and passion, for ambition was the ruling trait in that yet undeveloped nature, and its promptings bade her give her hand to Matra, while every voice in her better nature pleaded for him she truly loved.

She did not rise when the two women entered, but kept her eyes fixed upon the floor as if in deep meditation. Dame Marcante sharply spoke:

"How now, Clarice; I expected to find you in bed and asleep. A pretty-looking bride will you be to-morrow, with that woe-begone face and stupid look. Of what are you dreaming, child?"

"Of despair—death," replied the girl, drearily, lifting her eyes to the face of the speaker. "Do you think that I can sleep when my heart is torn with anguish? When hope has knocked at it for the last time? Oh, mother! I would that I were dead! dead! dead!"

Her voice died away in a feeble wail, and her head drooped upon her bosom in an attitude of hopeless dejection. Senora Marcante roughly shook her by the shoulders, as she said, in harsh tones:

"Are you determined to play the fool to the very last hour? Get up, go to your room, and get to bed. Any girl, with common sense, would exult in the grand future that opens to you to-morrow. You leave the peasant's cot to play the part of the great lady, and yet you talk of despair and death. Stuff! you'll laugh at all these heroics one of these days."

"If I do, it will not be as Matra's wife. No laugh will ever come to my lip, when once his kiss has polluted it."

"We shall see, all in good time; I have no fears for you when the words have been really said; you will come to your right reason then. Here is Marie Montoni to speak with you. I permitted her to come, though I knew it was giving you a last chance to send a message to that imprudent fisher lad, who would drag you down to his level by making you the sharer of his wretched poverty."

"Guilio is not poor; he is rich enough for one brought up as I have been, and I would rather mend his nets, and help him draw them with my own hand, than give it to this man you are forcing me to wed. Oh, Marie, good Marie, plead for me, for in this hour I am desperate."

She grasped the hand of the singer with such force that she could scarcely repress a cry of pain as she said:

"Words will now be useless, Clarice. Your mother has shown me her mind, and I am afraid she is immovable. Come with me and let me talk with you. I have calmed you before to-night, and caused you to listen to the voice of reason. You have always found good to flow from following my advice."

Clarice arose mechanically, and placed her hand in that of her friend. As the two turned towards the door leading into one of the side apartments, Marie said to the mother:

"Have no fears, mother Marcante, that I shall seek to influence Clarice against your wishes. Her fate is now placed beyond my control."

She mentally added, "And yours, too, for others are circumventing you fast enough without any aid from me. I may safely promise anything now."

The two girls entered the room of Clarice, and closed the door. It was small, with a single window which opened upon the bay, and commanded a view of the cove in which Falcone's lugger lay moored. Beside this was placed the crucifix, before which the poor girl offered up her prayers for his welfare, and while her orisons ascended to Heaven, her eyes could behold the beacon light which assured her of the presence and safety of her earthly idol.

She sunk down before the altar, bowed her head, and raised her clasped hands imploringly toward the head of Christ crowned with thorns, and her pale lips muttered:

"Pardon and guidance, oh friend of the friendless, for I am in a dire strait. Thou knowest my heart; oh, give me strength, give me courage, to walk in the path appointed to me. Let me not falter or grow weak."

Marie Montoni watched the wan face and pleading lips of Clarice with vivid interest, and while she is thus engaged, we will give a sketch of the heroic story of her own broken life.

At sixteen she was the betrothed bride of a daring Corsican who plotted against the enemies of his country. The conspiracy was revealed to the French commander, and the ringleaders were arrested and broken on the wheel, that most terrible of all cruel punishments. Among them was the youthful betrothed of poor Marie. He perished with manly courage, but his enemies refused to him the right of sepulture; the bodies of the slain patriots were exposed in the public square, and the penalty of death denounced against those who attempted to remove them.

Marie sat alone in her desolation, and to her excited senses the voice of her dead lover seemed ever beside her, wailing in her ears:

"The birds of prey tear my flesh, and no faithful heart is found to lay me in the tomb of my fathers."

The cry maddened her, and she was resolute to remove her martyred lover from the ignoble position he occupied. On a dark and starless night, Marie enveloped her form in a black faldetta, a national garment, the back extremity of which is thrown over the head in such a manner as to resemble a nun's hooded cloak.

Favored by the gloom of the night and this sombre garment, the heroic girl glided past the sentinel, and reached the square on which lay the corpses of those gallant men exposed to the dews of night, and the scorching sun of day. Last in the row lay the body of her beloved Antonio.

Nerving herself to the task, she passed the others, lifted the body of her lover, and bore it within a neighboring monastery, beneath the floor of which lay the burial vault of the dead man's family. With superhuman strength she gained the marble slab above its mouth, sat down in the dim light that came from a chapel near by, and sustained the ghastly head of Antonio upon her lap.

Tears and caresses were lavished upon the lifeless remains, and then she slid the body into the vault beneath, closed its mouth, and kneeling above it, offered prayers for the repose of his soul.

Marie gained her home in safety, and on the following day the family of Antonio were arrested on suspicion of violating the orders of the French commander. No sooner was this news conveyed to her than the real culprit presented herself before the officer, and confessed her guilt. She said:

"I have given burial to the remains of my betrothed. Let my life be the atonement, that the innocent may go free."

At first he was incredulous, but when convinced that this deed of heroism had actually been performed by a young and slender girl, he gave her her freedom, and ordered that the other bodies should be removed and buried. The parents of Marie were dead, and her relatives cast her off to lead the life of a wandering improvisatrice. From her musical talent she gleaned a precarious existence, and as her history was generally known throughout the island, shelter was never denied to her by a people who are singularly alive to every trait of heroism, and ready to excuse crime itself, if it is backed by the wild daring which forms the groundwork of their national character.

She also possessed another claim upon their sympathies. The vague sadness which became the predominant phase of her mind often gave her the air of a person whose senses have wandered beyond the control of their possessor; and the wild inspirations she sometimes uttered to the music of her guitar, gave her among the common people the reputation of a seeress.

Mysterious as the oracles of Delphi these utterances often were, but a weird significance was attached to them in the minds of the listeners, and few would willingly have offended the wandering musician, from the superstitious fear that the familiar spirits with whom they believed her in constant communion, would find means to avenge any slight put upon her.

From this feeling arose the consent of Senora Marcante to the interview between the reluctant bride-elect and her self-invited guest. She would willingly have played the spy upon the two friends, but the fear that the attendant spirit of the girl might reveal her espionage to Marie, withheld her. A belief in witchcraft is wide spread in Corsica, and Senora Marcante was not superior to the majority of her compatriots.

At length Clarice arose from her devotions, and turned her pale face toward her friend. She looked into her eyes, and saw burning in their dark depths a vivid light very different from the soft dreaminess that usually characterized them. She knew that Marie was ready to take some decided part in the drama of her own life which was to open with more than one striking tableau on the morrow.

She rapidly whispered:

"What is it, Marie? What have you to tell me? Did Guilio come upon the square? Did he—did he speak to my mother?"

"Yes, he did, and she roughly repelled him. Clarice, darling, there is no hope from that quarter. Your mother intends to give your hand to-morrow to the rich Matra, and, save in your own resolution, there is no help for you."

"That will not fail me now, for I tell you there *must*, there shall be help for me. God will not permit me to be forced into a marriage with Baptisto Matra, when I am in the sight of Heaven already a wife."

Marie started, and asked:

"What do you mean? I cannot understand you, Clarice."

"I only mean that I have solemnly plighted my troth to Guilio, and I dare not break the pledge I have given him. We have knelt together at the shrine of the Virgin, and repeated the form of the betrothal. He placed the bridal ring upon my finger, and I wear it concealed in my boddice. I look upon the vow taken, when this circlet of gold was accepted, as binding as if the priest had made us one flesh. Yes, Marie, I feel that in God's holy sight I am truly the wife of Guilio, and it is wicked even to think of giving myself to another."

Marie gravely shook her head.

"I am afraid your mother will scarcely view it in the same light, for she has declared that nothing shall prevent you from becoming the wife of Matra."

"My mother never loved me," replied Clarice, with a burst of passionate weeping. "She gave me advantages superior to those of my station; but I have always felt that her affections were given alone to Ninetta and Pietro. Why, then, shall I sacrifice myself to please her?"

"Ah, that is it; she has reared you for a higher station than you were born to fill, and she is only carrying out her plan by giving you to one who is rich enough to make a lady of you, and who is desperately enamored of you. I promised to say nothing against her plans, and I will not, but I say to you that hope is not yet dead and buried under Matra's piles of gold. If Guilio is what I take him to be, he will never let you be torn from him in this manner."

A knock came to the door, and Senora Marcante's head was thrust into the room.

"You talk too late. Clarice, you must sleep a few hours, or your eyes will lose all their brightness. Marie, too, needs rest. I insist that you shall put out the light, and retire."

Clarice coldly replied:

"Since it is your last night of authority over me, Madame, I obey you. I have little further to say to Marie; all that remains to me now is to prepare for the event of the morrow."

"Come, now, that is rational. I thought you would listen to reason when you found opposition to my will to be quite useless. Sleep in peace, that your cheeks may be blooming, and your nerves steady when you stand before the priest as the bride of the wealthiest trader in Isola Rossa. Think what a beautiful house you will have; how fine your dress will be. Ah, you will be the envy of every girl of your acquaintance."

"For what, Madame?" asked the girl, with bitterness. "For the grace and elegance of my betrothed? for the nobility of his character? the generosity of his nature? Those only are legitimate causes of envy, and not the mean dazzle of gold, which, if report speaks truly, has been won by any other than upright and honorable means. Yes—they will do well to envy me my lover. I can only say, that any one among them is quite welcome to take him, with all his possessions, even if they were ten times as great as they are, for I set no value either on Senor Matra or his wealth."

"Then you are a stupid and ungrateful creature, who is unworthy to be elevated to the pinnacle of prosperity by the efforts of those connected with you. I have done all I could to bring about this marriage, and whether you thank me or not, it shall certainly take place. I am glad that Matra takes you to-morrow under his own charge, for I am tired of your caprices and impertinence."

Clarice listened disdainfully; she turned her eyes with a searching expression upon the old woman, as she suddenly asked:

"Madame, are you really entitled to claim from me a *daughter's* obedience? Answer me truly, as Heaven shall judge you."

At this unexpected question Senora Marcante recoiled, and grew visibly paler; but she recovered instantly, with a derisive laugh, replied:

"I am willing to abide its judgment; are you not my child? To whom else, then, should your obedience be due?"

"That is the question I myself asked; for your harshness toward me, your want of affection for me, compel me at times to doubt the relationship. Am I your daughter, or that of the stranger who, seventeen years ago, found refuge in this cottage, and died here?"

The unexpected nature of this question evidently disconcerted Senora Marcante, for she became extremely pale, as she faltered:

"What absurd stories have you been listening to? What do you know of a stranger who once came hither in distress?"

"I know much about her, and the stories cannot be so absurd if they produce the effect I now witness. Speak, Madame, am I your child or that of the stranger who came in darkness and storm, to ask for shelter for herself and the infant she carried in her arms."

Senora Marcante turned to Marie with an assumed expression of commiseration, as she said:

"Clarice is growing mad. I am afraid that Baptisto will be forced to put her in a lunatic asylum before the honeymoon is over. Poor child! it is fearful to have the temper get the better of the judgment thus. Can you not bring her to a more rational state, good Marie? Persuade her to retire, and dismiss this absurd fancy from her mind. Not my own child, indeed! Why should I have kept her through all these long years, and given her every advantage that a nobleman's daughter might have claimed, if she belonged to another person?"

"Because you were well paid to do so," said Clarice, still intently regarding her. "No—I am not mad yet; I keep that last phase of misery till you have really made me the wife of Matra. Then, I may go mad at my leisure, for I shall have nothing else to do."

"You shall have the chance to try it, at all events," replied Dame Marcante, angrily; "for you shall be the wife of Baptisto before twenty-four hours have rolled away. My authority shall not be set at naught by you, on the silly ground that you are the child of some other person. An Italian lady once dwelt in my house. She had enjoyed wealth and high station; but she died in my arms a few hours after her child went to the angels, and both are buried in the church yard. It is ridiculous for you, Clarice Marcante, to set yourself up as the descendant of a high born woman. You, who are of peasant blood! ha! ha! it makes me laugh."

Clarice glanced toward the mirror in which her patrician head was reflected, and a haughty smile curved her lips, as she replied:

"I do not believe that plebeian blood flows in my veins. Look at me—compare me with the two children to whom all your love is given, and tell me if we bear the same seal from the hand of divinity. You treat me as an alien, you crush my hopes without remorse, and yet you claim the sacred name of mother. My heart refuses to acknowledge the tie. Daily, for months, has the conviction been growing upon me that I have no claim of blood upon you. Wherefore, then, attempt to force me into a marriage which must render me miserable?"

The woman sneered, though she evidently trembled. She spoke, in a husky voice:

"Go to bed, Clarice, and sleep off this fit of heroics. To-morrow you will be calm, and willing to see that your mother knows best what is for your welfare. No beggarly fisherman shall claim child of mine for his wife. You shall have houses and lands, silks and jewels, in place of the spoils of the sea as your only portion. Marie, reason with this silly child, and bring her to her sober senses."

"Leave her with me, and I will see what can be done," replied Marie. "You are both excited now, and had better separate."

Dame Marcante raised her voice to its most positive pitch as she said:

"Good night, then, and see that you heed my warning. There is no escape from this house to-night; the path to the sea is watched, as is that toward the hills, for Matra shall not be foiled of his bride to-morrow."

With this information she left the room, and after a whispered consultation between the two girls they threw themselves upon the bed and endeavored to sleep.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

LOVE AND MORAL COURAGE.

BY AMY RANDOLPH.

"But why don't you like him, Agatha?"

"Oh—because!"

"What philosopher ever solved the mystery of this true woman's reason? "Because" means ten thousand things that pretty, dimpled lips don't choose to put into shape—it means that they know *why* perfectly well themselves, but won't tell; and not all the coaxings of curiosity, can get it out of them!

And so pretty Agatha Milne played with the knot of scarlet roses, whose velvet petals glowed in her belt-ribbon, and lifted up her soft hazel-brown eyes with a provokingly absent, unconscious look.

"But, Agatha!" pursued Ruth Ellenwood, stopping for a moment in her occupation of braiding and arranging Agatha's beautiful waves of auburn-gold hair, "I'm sure I have heard you say, again and again, he was such a pleasant partner at balls and parties, and—oh, Agatha! don't jerk your head so, or I shall have to braid all these strands over again!"

"Nonsense! that's no test at all!" said Agatha, pettishly, the peach-like crimson mounting to her cheek; "what can you tell about a young man, from a mere ball-room acquaintance? Any one can be agreeable enough to hold your bouquet, or bring you an ice-cream; that is, if he knows enough not to tread on your toes in the polka, nor step on your flounces in a promenade!"

"I know it," said Ruth, "but the question is——"

"But the question is," interrupted the imperious young beauty, "how do I know that Mr. Fitz Aubyn, silver-tongued as he is to me, with his homage and his compliments, don't go home and swear at his mother and sisters? How do I know that Mr. Jennings, who has the whole dictionary at his finger-ends, doesn't cheat his landlady? What means have I of ascertaining that young St. Simons, who is such a graceful waltzer and agreeable small-talker, does not finish his evenings in a drinking-saloon? Oh, Ruth, we have tests for ascertaining spurious dollars and counterfeit bank notes, but how on earth are we to know a counterfeit husband, until he is tied to our unlucky apron-strings for life?"

She laughed as she sprang up to look for her bonnet, but the long eyelashes drooped low with a very suspicious moisture.

"Well," said Ruth, caressingly patting Agatha's tiny hand, "I am very, very thankful that Providence didn't make *me* a beauty and an heiress, since it has such a tendency to awake suspicion and distrust. But, Agatha, in spite of all you have said, I feel firmly convinced that Charles Stanton is a noble fellow!"

"Very likely," said Agatha, lightly; "but here is Fitz Aubyn, with those splendid white horses of his, so give me my shawl."

"And whither are your footsteps to be directed to-day?"

"Oh, we are going to that private view of pictures in —— street, you know."

And Agatha swept out of the room with the imperial port of a young queen.

The white lustre of noonlight, pouring down through the circular dome of frosted glass, gave a life-like glow to the superb paintings whose gilded frames literally covered the walls of the vast *suite* of apartments. Here and there, groups of absorbed *dilettanti* moved, with subdued whispers and brandished opera glasses, as if it were a forbidden thing to speak above one's breath in the presence of these fair landscapes and classic scenes from history's page.

Directly in front of one of the finest works of art stood a pair who had unconsciously been the object of many a curious glance and whispered observation of the other sight-seers—a tall, stylish-looking young man, with an old lady leaning on his arm, whose antique dress of snuff-colored bombazine and oddly-shaped beaver bonnet occasioned a good many covert smiles and half-concealed titters from the various observers.

"O, by the way, Miss Milne," said Fitz Aubyn, as, in their progress round the rooms, this couple gradually came in view, "you haven't seen the greatest curiosity of all, yet."

"Where?" said Agatha, raising her opera glass.

"You are mistaken—it don't hang on the walls," returned Fitz Aubyn, laughing. "Look a little nearer earth, if you want to see Stanton and his fossil aunt!"

Agatha turned her head accordingly, without remark—she smiled a little, however, which was all that Fitz Aubyn wanted.

"Should you suppose any mortal youth would have the courage to bring such a last-century specimen to a place like this, where he might know he would meet all his fashionable acquaintances! Upon my word, I believe he'll take her to the opera next! See him carrying her morocco bag and cotton umbrella! Don't he remind you of Don Quixote in his youthful days?"

"Probably she has money to leave one of these days," said Agatha, the distrustful element uppermost in her mind for the moment.

"Not a red cent. I know, for I've inquired. She is 'in reduced circumstances'—that's the term, I believe—but Stanton is very fond of her, nevertheless. She has come up to town from the backwoods for a few days, and——"

He paused abruptly as the very pair in question approached, still absorbed in picture gazing.

"My dear Charles," said the old lady, at length, "you cannot imagine what a treat this is to me—I have not seen such pictures as these since I was a child. How thoughtful of you to bring me here!"

"I knew you would enjoy it, aunt!"

"And you are not ashamed of your old-fashioned relative among all these gay young people?"

"On the contrary, dear aunt, I am as proud as a monarch while you are leaning on my arm!"

Agatha heard it all, and she also heard him answer, in reply to the gay challenge of some companion:

"Thank you, but don't reckon upon me as one of your party this evening at the opera. I am going with my aunt, who is passionately fond of music, so you must excuse me for once."

"I told you so!" said Fitz Aubyn, in a *sotto voce* tone, shrugging his shoulders. "Did you ever see such a fellow as Stanton!"

"Never," was Agatha's reply, but it was so emphatically spoken that Fitz Aubyn started.

And that night when the courted beauty was brushing out her luxuriant hair, she paused many a time and fell into a thoughtful revery.

"Moral courage!" she murmured to herself "I have somewhere read that it is nobler far than the iron resolution which makes men reckless in battle. I wonder——"

And there she stopped resolutely.

What a glorious, bracing New Year's Day it was! There had been just snow enough in the night to form a white glistening coat over everything, and afford an excellent excuse for the merry sleighs that darted hither and thither with streaming furs and jingling bells. All the fashionable world was astir—the gentlemen busily consulting their interminable lists of calls, and the ladies putting the last touches to their gorgeous toilettes.

There were not many upon that day who received more adulation than Agatha Milne, as she stood like a young empress in her splendid drawing-rooms, every mirror flashing back her loveliness. Her dress was very simple—pink silk, edged around the shoulders with snowy ermine, and long sprays of jessamine drooping from her hair; yet she knew that she had never been so beautiful as now, as she listened with languid smiles to the compliments showered upon her. It was nothing new!

The gilded chandeliers had been lighted, and the jeweled fingers of the tiny alabaster clock on the mantel pointed to a late hour, when the peal of the door-bell announced a new incursion of guests, and Mr. Fitz Aubyn entered, surrounded by a gay party of young men.

"Good evening, Miss Milne! surely I am not too late to wish you the happiest of all imaginable New Years? Whom do you suppose I saw steering in the direction of your hospitable mansion just now? O, here he comes to speak for himself—the Chevalier Charley Stanton!"

Agatha turned calmly to welcome the new comer, and the keenest eye could scarcely have discerned the deeper shade of color that glowed on her delicate cheek, as he quietly came forward to greet her.

"Fill your glasses, gentlemen," exclaimed Fitz Aubyn, holding high above his head a tiny chalice of engraven Bohemian glass, brimming with crimson wine, "and let us drink to the health of our fair hostess, Miss Agatha Milne!"

The impromptu toast was received with general acclamations of satisfaction, and Fitz Aubyn glanced around a second time to see if all had followed his injunctions, ere he touched his lips to the glass.

"Come Stanton, no lack of chivalry here; where's your glass!"

"I will drink Miss Milne's health in clear iced-water with the greatest pleasure," said Stanton, smiling; "but I never touch wine!"

"Never touch wine? and pray why not?"

"Because it is against my principles," said Stanton, with quiet firmness.

Fitz Aubyn curled his lips in contemptuous silence, that was several degrees harder to bear than spoken obloquy, but another young man leaned forward to interpose his word.

"Offer it to him yourself, Miss Milne; surely he cannot be so lost to all sense of gallantry as to refuse it from *your* fair hand!"

Agatha had grown very pale, but without speaking, she filled one of the tiny goblets, and held it towards Charles Stanton.

"Will you not take it from me?"

Stanton looked at her with calm gravity.

"Miss Milne, I should be a coward indeed did I allow your persuasions to sway me from the fixed principles which are the guiding stars of my whole life."

He bowed and withdrew. The glass fell from Agatha's hand, and shivered into a thousand sparkling fragments; she bit her scarlet lip until the blood started, with a strange sympathetic thrill of exultation. Had he wavered for an instant in his determination, she would have despised him!

"A very poor investment those horses of mine, and all this behavior *a-la-good-boy-in-story-books*," muttered Fitz Aubyn, about four weeks subsequently, as he strode into the brilliantly illuminated *salons* of the Club House. "Here, waiter, a glass of brandy and water—quick!"

"What's the matter, Fitz? you look as black as a thunder-cloud?" observed a bystander, who was leaning against a marble pillar and picking his teeth in a most leisurely and epicurean manner.

"The matter? Do you remember that magnificent Agatha Milne, the Queen of all the Beauties?"

"Of course I do; she hasn't lost her wits nor her property, I hope?"

"No; but *I've* lost the latter item pretty effectually. Who do you suppose she is going to marry?"

"I am sure I cannot guess. Do tell your news at once, and don't keep a fellow in suspense this sort of way."

"Well, she is going to become Mrs. Charley Stanton; actually going to marry a man with a fossil aunt, and *principles* that won't allow him to drink a glass of wine! Bah! the humbug that passes current in this world."

"I could have prophesied as much before, my dear boy, if you would only have done me the honor to listen to me," observed the other, coolly unfolding the newspaper, so as to get at the inside columns. "You gay, dashing young fellows are all very well as long as a girl wants to amuse herself; but when it comes to a life-long question, she's apt to prefer a *safe* man for a husband!"

Fitz Aubyn groaned deeply, but considered his position too precarious to be worth arguing!

Meanwhile little Ruth Ellenwood was as busy as a bee working at her cousin's wedding-robe of spotless white satin, and asking ten thousand questions, the final of which always was:

"But, Agatha, you never would tell me *why* you didn't like him, and now you're just as bad. Tell me, that's a darling, why you changed your mind?"

And Agatha only laughed and crimsoned, and made the same old provoking answer:

"Oh, *because!*"

TRUTH IN CONVERSATION.

The love of truth is the stimulus to all noble conversation. This is the root of all the charities. The tree which springs from it may have a thousand branches, but they will all bear a golden and generous fruitage. It is the loftiest impulse to inquire—willing to communicate and more willing to receive—contemptuous of petty curiosity, but passionate for glorious knowledge. Speech without it is but a babble. Rhetoric is more noisy but less useful than the tinman's trade. When the love of truth fires up the passions, puts its lightning in the brain, then men may know that a prophet is among them. This is the spring of all heroism, and clothes the martyr with a flame that outshines the flame that kills him. Compared with this, the emulations of argument—the pungencies of sarcasm—the pride of logic—the pomp of declamation—are as the sounds of an automaton to the voice of a man.

THE STARS.—What is there beyond the stars? Other stars, brighter and lovelier, in a scale of ascending magnificence—worlds beyond worlds—all glorious, and all God's. It was the conclusion of the elder Herschell, that the depth of the Milky Way, in some places, admitted of 500 stars being ranged in a line, one behind the other, and "each separated from the other by a distance equal to that which divides our sun from the nearest fixed star."

LOVE'S HAPPINESS.

BY FINLEY JOHNSON.

Oh, do you e'er remember, love,
  How on one summer's night
We strayed upon the sandy beach
  Beneath the soft moonlight;
And as we sat beside the sea,
  And listened to its roar,
I press'd thy hand, and vow'd, dear one,
  To love thee more and more;
Oh, then indeed our hearts were light,
  And, like the summer flowers,
We drank in love as their frail buds
  Drink in the April showers.

The moonbeams with a holy light
  Fell on the glassy sea.
The stars shone pure as jewel'd gems,
  But I—saw only thee;
I heeded not the beauties rare,
  Which all around us shone,
My thoughts were all on one who was
  My beautiful—my own.
I only knew I clasped thy form
  Of classic grace with pride,
I heeded not the sea's low voice,
  For thou wert by my side.

THE WIDOW WALDRON;

OR,

THE HEIRS OF THE ST. JULIAN ESTATE.

BY MARY C. VAUGHAN.

"Ah! my God, can it be possible!" exclaimed Mr. St. Julian, in tones in which pain and surprise were equally mingled. He laid down his newspaper, and turned toward his daughter, who sat at the head of his breakfast table, a face that had grown suddenly pale with some profound emotion.

"What is it, papa?" the young lady inquired, rising with extreme solicitude, and coming round the table to his side. He handed her the paper, pointing in silence to the article he had been reading.

"Accident at sea.—Terrible loss of life.—Collision of ships in a dense fog off the coast of ———," she read. "Very shocking, is it not, papa? The poor people! Did you know any of them, papa?"

"Yes, dear. Poor Waldron was on board. You remember that I mentioned him to you? There is his name, among the lost."

"Ah, yes—the young man whom you assisted. Had he a family, papa?"

"Yes—a wife and two little ones, I think. Poor bereaved ones. This is sad news—terrible news for them. And to think he risked his all, and has lost it! They will be utterly destitute, I fear."

"How is that, papa? I seem to remember that you told me Mr. Waldron had a pretty home, and all things quite comfortable for his family, for the story comes to my recollection as we talk about it. Did you not say that he was tolerably well off to stay at home, and that you did not quite approve of his mania for speculation?"

"Yes; you are quite right. I endeavored to dissuade him from his project. But he was most enthusiastic in its favor, and bent on carrying it out. I was finally persuaded to provide the necessary money, and he insisted on securing me with the whole of his estate."

"He has lost all, then; and his family are not only bereaved, but penniless?"

"Yes, my dear. I fear that is the actual state of the case."

"But, papa——" the speaker hesitated, and looked at her father with eyes swimming in tears. "Surely, papa, this should not be! We can better afford to lose this money than these poor creatures their home. Cannot something be done for them?"

"Certainly. I can give up property fully worth the fifteen thousand I loaned to young Waldron. I am an old man, and shall not feel the w[illegible] of it while I live; but my children [illegible] blame [illegible] for throwing away their inheritance in so lavish a manner."

"Oh, no, papa! No, indeed! How can you think we should hesitate? I, for one, will willingly forego all claim upon my share of the amount. This poor young widow, and little fatherless children, need it far more than we, who have already a superfluity of this world's goods. Pray, papa, restore their home to these poor things."

Thus pleaded this lovely girl. She was the youngest of the flock, her father's pet and companion; his housekeeper also, left alone with him, now that all the rest had gone their separate ways. It was very hard to deny her anything, and the old man promised that the widow should be secured in the possession of her home.

"The boys will have enough," he said. "They are all shrewd fellows and rich, or fast becoming so; and the girls are well married, all but you, my pet——"

"Never mind me, papa," interpolated the young lady.

"But I must, my dear. I always mind you. It is just what I am going to do now, signing away a pretty fortune at your bidding. So, pet, help me on with my coat, and I'll go to Pouncet's at once and order the papers drawn up. When you've a bad job to do, it's always best to have it over at once."

Great was the suppressed wonder of Pouncet & Parchment, represented on this occasion by Pouncet in person, at the peremptory orders given by their highly-respected client. But Mr. St. Julian, offering no explanation beyond those facts of the case necessary to insure legal correctness in the papers ordered, had soon finished his business. He cared nothing for furtive glances of wonder, nor for stares of amazement. His mind was intent only upon the benevolent act he intended to perform. He left the office, and on gaining the street hailed an omnibus, and in the course of an hour was set down at a short distance from the suburban villa which was still the home of the Waldron family.

The morning's tidings had already filled that lovely home with unspeakable sorrow. Mr. St. Julian found some difficulty in obtaining admittance, for Mrs. Waldron, in the first agonies of her grief, could hardly summon courage even to welcome one who had been the sincere and helpful friend of the lost husband. The assurance, however, that he had something of comfort to impart, at length gained him entrance, and half an hour later he left the young widow slightly more resigned to that stroke of Providence which had made her children fatherless, since they were not to be homeless beggars also.

So having laid the train for the accomplishment of his good intentions, and spoken comforting words to the bereaved, the kind old man left the widow's house and set out for home.

The day was spent by this time, and the old man was weary; not more with business performed than from the unusual emotion he had undergone since the morning. Looking anxiously for the omnibus that but infrequently passed that distant point, he slowly paced the ill-paved street.

Suddenly he stopped, leaning heavily against the rude paling in front of a laborer's hut, and the curious group watching him from the low doorway saw him waver and fall.

Twilight had fallen, and the dinner hour was already past. A bright fire, rendered necessary by the chillness of the spring evening, burned in the grate, the gas blazed from the handsome chandelier, and beneath it the table, with its handsome service, was laid for a small party. Up stairs in the drawing-room, the eldest son of Mr. St. Julian, with his wife and children, awaited the return of their father. They were not anxious, only a little surprised at the delay, but Bella St. Julian, a prey to apprehension, ensconced behind the curtains of the dining-room, was gazing out into the fast darkening street.

Her eyes first saw the carriage that slowly drew up before the door, and watched the clumsy removal of the miserable inmate, and her shriek summoned children and servants to bring across his own threshold him who never more should pass it save in the narrow couch of death.

A few days passed and all was over. Death had been busy, and like a reaper, he had borne away his sheaves of "corn fully ripe." Vigorous frame, kindly face, white locks, all lay beneath the sod.

Bella St. Julian was an orphan, and amidst the confusion, the grief, and the pain of those dreadful days of bereavement, it is not wonderful that the memory of the Waldrons passed entirely from her mind, or, if recalled at all, came only with the belief that her father had accomplished all he intended for this poor family.

It was not till some weeks had passed since her bereavement, and Bella had already removed from the home of her childhood, to that of a married sister with whom she was to reside temporarily, that she was reminded of the existence of Mrs. Waldron by receiving that lady's card one morning, together with an earnest request that Miss St. Julian would see her, if but for a moment.

The interview was a long and painful one. Mrs. Waldron had been surprised by the announcement of the foreclosure of the mortgage, which, in her ignorance of business, she had supposed canceled according to Mr. St. Julian's promise. She had hastened to Pouncet & Parchment, who blandly assured her that the papers drawn up by Mr. St. Julian's desire, the day previous to his decease, were quite worthless, since they had never received his signature.

"He was a Quixotic old gentleman—mind evidently failing. Of course Mrs. Waldron could not expect that his heirs would conclude an undertaking that would lessen the value of the estate full fifteen thousand dollars now, and with the probable, nay, certain rise of the value of real estate in the upper wards of the city, a much larger amount in the future." So Mr. Pouncet said, and Mrs. Waldron left his presence without having received any comfort from her visit.

She had come from thence straightway to visit Bella, remembering, in this hour of trouble, that the good old man had spoken of his daughter as the kindly instigator of his intended act.

Bella could only promise to use her influence with the heirs, of whom she was the most powerless, since she was still under age, and not legally competent to take control of her own portion. She could only warmly sympathize with the young widow, and promise to use such small influence as she possessed. Comforted somewhat by having found a friend in the family she had come to look upon as her oppressors, Mrs. Waldron wended her way to the home no longer hers.

Like too many American women, she had been reared as if fortune was certain, and the necessity of exertion impossible. Yet she was healthy and energetic, and quite ready to do anything respectable for the support of her children, if she had but known how.

As it was, she lived in a fearful state of incertitude and foreboding during the few days that elapsed between her visit to Bella, and that on which the young lady drove out to the villa, and alighted at the gate, not without a shudder as she recalled her father's fateful journey thither.

Bella, unwilling to trust her errand to a stranger, or to unsympathizing paper, had come with [illegible] most kindness, in spite of a reluctance to be the bearer of disappointment, to bring to Mrs. Waldron the ultimatum of the heirs of the St. Julian estate.

She had been laughed to scorn in a family council, in which she pleaded, and finally insisted, that the interrupted intention of her father should be carried out. And she did not mention how she finally prevailed, by promising some essential sacrifices on her own part, in having the arrangement made which she now came to propose to Mrs. Waldron.

The executor of the estate, the elder brother, with the consent of the heirs, bound himself to give, rent free, to Mrs. Waldron, a handsome, commodious house in a central part of the city, so long as she chose to occupy it, on condition that she should at once vacate her present home.

"You have the furniture of this pretty place, Mrs. Waldron," said Bella. "Why not at once remove to your new home, and open a boarding-house. I will come to you at once, and I have the furniture of my own apartments, which was my dear father's gift, that I will bring with me, and I will use all possible influence among my friends to bring people to you. You will thus insure a home to your children, and have the opportunity of laying aside something for the future. What say you? I have done my best for you; for my brother says, not, I admit, without some justice, that my father, having given Mr. Waldron $15,000, is no reason why his heirs should give his family $15,000 more."

Mrs. Waldron was in tears, but they were not bitter tears. She knew well that she had no shadow of legal claim upon the St. Julian estate, and that she was really offered a great benefit. The life proposed to her offered nothing desirable in itself, but for her children's sake she was more than willing to enter upon it. With thanks, then, she accepted the offer, and prepared at once for her removal.

She was charmed with Bella, and was besides shrewd enough to comprehend that the patronage of a young, fashionable woman might be of immense benefit to her. Though she lost her home she did not lose hope, and she entered upon her new life with much energy and good-will.

Not long after Bella's removal to Mrs. Waldron's boarding-house, a younger brother of hers, long resident in foreign countries, came home. The old household bond was broken. Of all the family Bella alone had no home of her own; and it was natural that this bachelor brother should find a place for himself beneath the roof that sheltered her.

Here he remained for perhaps two years, Bella and himself ever warmly assiduous in the cause of their young hostess, who made their home most pleasant to them, in return for their kindness.

Mrs. Waldron was very pretty, very graceful, and really an accomplished and almost brilliant woman. Bella had learned to love her very much, and Mr. Robert St. Julian was wont to assert that it was not, by any means, unreasonable that she should do so.

If Bella had been very shrewd she might have retorted that that which seemed so very rational in her, must be equally so for her brother. But she did not think of this, and was quite satisfied and pleased that he should befriend her friend, and remain her own peculiar brother and attendant.

She was, therefore, a good deal surprised, and at first not quite pleased, when Robert knocked at her parlor-door one evening, and entering, accompanied by Mrs. Waldron, begged to present her to his sister as his future wife. She gave her congratulations, however, without any perceptible coldness; and it was not until her brother returned from escorting Mrs. Waldron down-stairs, that she uttered the only objection that occurred to her.

"Those children, Robert."

"They need the care of a father, and I will adopt them as my own. They already love their Aunt Bella dearly."

"Little rogues," said Bella, with a smile, and she ventured no further opposition.

The villa had fallen to Mr. Robert St. Julian, in the apportionment of the estate; and therefore, in little more than two years from the time she left it, Mrs. Waldron, now Mrs. Robert St. Julian, again entered it as mistress. There she and her "newly-constructed" household lived happily ever after, and there Bella continued to reside until her own marriage made her mistress of another home.

THE ONE DARK SPOT.

A LIFE SKETCH.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

"Never!—never!—never!"

"Don't talk so, Aaron."

"I mean just what I say, Nancy. It's no use for you to talk to me. I'll never speak to him—never have more to do with him. Let him walk his path, and I'll walk mine. He has cut himself off from my friendship most effectually. Don't say anything more, for I don't want to hear it."

"But, Aaron, I must say one thing more. If I may not speak of Gilbert Harwood, let me speak of yourself. I can see what you cannot. I can see that you are cherishing a source of discomfort. You are nurturing a growth in your soul that can only yield to you fruit of pain and anguish. This has come upon you as the one dark spot in the heaven of your joys. I believe that Gilbert would be glad to take your hand——"

"Stop, Nancy! You said you would not speak of him."

"Just this once, my husband. Let me say this one word: I believe Gilbert would be glad to grasp your hand once more. It would make him happier, and it would make you happier."

"Make me happier!" cried the husband. "You are foolish. Do you imagine that I allow such a thing as that to trouble me. Pshaw!"

"It does trouble you, nevertheless. Ah, Aaron, these little pain-spots of social life are not so easily put away from the mind. Pain is pain, and it must remain in the system until the cause is removed."

"Bah! Don't talk any more. I tell you, I want nothing to do with him. I won't have anything to do with him,—and that's enough." And with this Aaron Gould left the house.

Aaron Gould and Gilbert Harwood had been, in the years agone, warm and devoted friends. At school they had been playmates; in youth they had been companions; and in maturer years they had been co-laborers in many good works. Their wives were cousins, and their circles of social life ran together. They belonged to the same religious association, and were members of the same club and lyceum. And, furthermore, they were both influential men in society, and were looked up to by the masses. Nearly a year previous to the present, the political party with which both the friends acted nominated a certain man for office. Aaron Gould was foremost in effecting said nomination, while Gilbert Harwood declared that it was a nomination not fit to be made, and also refused to vote for the candidate. Gould, in the heat of his disappointment, gave it as his opinion that Harwood was [illegible] himself. Harwood pronounced [illegible] whereupon Gould considered that his fri[illegible] called him a liar, and proceeded to express himself accordingly. A few busy-bodies and go-betweens, of whom there are always plenty on hand in such cases, carried bits of scandal from one to the other, until the words of separation were spoken. The tale-bearer told his story, and carried back the reply; and in this way Gould was led to say some very hard things against Harwood; and Harwood said some very hard things against Gould.

And yet Aaron Gould had done the first real wrong. Gilbert Harwood, in opposing the nomination of a man whom he considered unfit for office, in a political caucus, had done no more than he had a perfect right to do. But when Aaron Gould impeached the motives which led his friend to this act, he did a wrong. And so, as is natural, Aaron Gould came to cherish the most bitter enmity; for, in cases of quarrels between neighbors, he is the most bitter and unforgiving who has done the most wrong.

Aaron Gould had prospered in business until he had amassed sufficient wealth to render him independent, and he had been blessed, in other ways, with all that makes life pleasant and agreeable. Time was when he was happy and contented. He could return to his home, from the toils and labors of the day, and sit down in peace and joy. He could take his children upon his knees, and bless them with smiles and cheer. He could tell to his loved ones all the doings of the day—could reflect upon them all his thoughts and feelings—without one blush or quiver. But it was not so now. All was not now bright: There was one dark spot in his life, and its shadow was often upon his brow. At first he had fancied that it would be a very easy thing to cast off his friend, and to forget him; but the ordeal was more severe than he had expected. He met Harwood in the street almost every day, but did not speak with him. He met him at church, and on 'Change, but did not salute him. In order to do this it was necessary that his resolve should be fortified; and in order to fortify the resolve it was necessary that he should keep in memory the wrong he had suffered. Thus the very means which enabled him to carry out his purpose of enmity furnished fuel for a continual fire of ill-feeling in his bosom.

It was sad to see those two men so far apart. It pained others beside themselves. It made their wives unhappy, and led their children into unpleasant moods, and wherever they both chanced to be present in any assembly, as was sometimes necessarily the case, an atmosphere of coldness and unpleasantness came with them, and pervaded all about them.

"Never! never! never!" said Aaron Gould, as he went out from his house. "I'll have no more to do with him! I'll speak to him never again!"

As he passed on to his store he met Gilbert Harwood in the street. He saw who the man was, and then turned his head and walked on. It was not a pleasant emotion which he experienced then—far from it. It was a painful emotion, and the feelings that were thus called up remained to pain him for hours. If he could only have made himself believe that Harwood was unworthy of love or respect, or if he could have convinced himself that Harwood was much different from the friend of other years, or, further still, if he could have laid the soothing unction to his soul that he himself had been guilty of no wrong towards the estranged one—if he could have done this, he might have borne the burden with a clearer conscience. As it was, the thing yielded him a vast deal of uneasiness and unhappiness. He was not the free and independent man of other days. He could not walk the street without being liable to meet the man whom he feared to meet.

"Why should this one thing trouble me?" said Aaron Gould. "In all the rest of my life there is no dark spot. So little a thing is nothing to me."

Ah, a pebble of the size of the tenth part of a pea is a very small thing, but it is a very uncomfortable thing to wear in one's boot. A mote floating in the air is smaller still—so small that the vision can hardly perceive it—and yet that tiny mote, lodged within the delicate structure of the eye, may become a source of exquisite pain. And the human soul is as sensitive as is the foot or the eye. A very little thing of ill lodged therein is sufficient to cause great disturbance. In short, Aaron Gould was like a watch which has one of its little wheels disabled by the bending of a single cog. Whenever the revolving of the machinery brings that cog into play, there must be a convulsion of the whole structure.

"Harwood is in rather a hard fix," said a man in Aaron Gould's store, one day.

"Do you mean Gilbert Harwood?" asked a bystander.

"Yes."

"What is the trouble?"

"Why, old Seth Piper has come down on him, and he is likely to lose his river land."

"How is it?" asked a third party, who knew nothing of the merits of the case.

"Thus it is," said the first speaker: "Some years ago Gilbert Harwood lent his name to a friend—signed that friend's paper to the amount of some thousands of dollars—the friend died, and Harwood had to pay the whole. In doing this he was forced to mortgage this river land very heavily. Seth Piper, by some means, has come into possession of that mortgage, and now, through a legal course, is about to take possession of the land."

"The land is valuable, then?" said the questioner.

"Bless you, yes. The best water-power in this section of the country is upon it. Harwood has been offered five thousand dollars just for the simple privilege, but, you see, he had planned to erect mills himself, and would have done so ere this, had it not been for his misfortune in lending his name to his friend."

"How much is the amount of this mortgage?"

"About eight thousand dollars. Under ordinary circumstances he could easily raise the money, but now he finds it impossible. Those who owe him cannot pay, and his business is so cramped that he dares not trust his paper in the market. If he could have time there would be no trouble, but Piper will not spare him. In fact, Seth Piper is bound to own those river lots about the falls, if the thing can be brought about. He bought the mortgage on purpose to crush out the present ownership."

Aaron Gould, from his counting-room, heard this conversation; and as he walked homeward that evening his thoughts were turned into a new and tortuous channel. He remembered how many times Gilbert Harwood had helped him in business payments, and how often, in times past, they had accommodated each other.

"Aye," he soliloquized, as he walked on, "and I remember how Gilbert Harwood lost eleven thousand dollars by signing Belknap Warden's paper.—And I remember more, too: He paid every dollar of it, and did not touch his hand to the little property which had been left by the dying man—did not touch it, but left it for the widow and the orphans. He might have taken over a thousand dollars if he had been so disposed, but he was above the deed.—[illegible]"

Aaron uttered [illegible] suddenly saw Gilbert Harwood coming towards him; but he did not have to turn his head away this time. No—for Harwood was not looking up. His head was bowed; his step was unsteady; and his cheek looked pale and careworn; and, moreover, as he walked away into the dusky shades, he groaned like one whose suffering has racked the soul.

Aaron Gould reached his home, and sat down to his supper. His wife asked him if he was ill.

"No," he answered. "A little matter of business—that's all. I'll tell you some time."

When Aaron was alone in his library, he felt as he had not felt before for months. There was a warmth about the heart that had been absent for a long time. The misfortune of his former friend had touched him where he could not refuse to feel. For an hour he remained thus alone, part of the time sitting in his chair, and part of the time pacing to and fro. There was a conflict in his soul. An angel and a spirit of darker mien argued for supremacy. Finally there was a conquest; and when the judgment was rendered the man stood erect and proud, with his hands clasped upon his bosom, and a tear glistening in his eye.

He sat down to his desk, and drew a check upon his bankers for ten thousand dollars; and then he wrote the following note:

> GILBERT HARWOOD:—Enclosed I send you my check for ten thousand dollars. If you have use for it, make me a note for the amount, payable as many months, or years, from date as may suit your convenience. Your acceptance of this proposition will signify to me that when we meet again we meet as in the olden time, forgetting that there has ever been a cloud between us.
>
> I am, at heart, as of old,
> Your friend, AARON GOULD.

Mr. Gould called his groom, and bade him take the note to Mr. Harwood, and wait for an answer. In just one hour the servant returned, bringing the answer in writing. Aaron broke the seal of the missive, and found a slip of paper within. His heart gave a sudden throb of pain as the thought flashed upon him that it might be his own check. But, no—it was Gilbert Harwood's note, for the ten thousand dollars, payable in one year, with interest; and with it was the following:

> DEAR AARON:—With a heart almost bursting I accept your proposition. God bless you!
>
> I am, as of old,
> Your friend, GILBERT HARWOOD.

On the following morning Aaron Gould walked to Harwood's house, for he was determined that their first meeting should be in private. They met in the parlor, and as they grasped each other by the hand, their lips trembled, and their eyes overflowed.

"Gilbert, during a whole year I have been fast asleep; and I have just awakened to greet my old friend."

"Aaron, you have recounted my experience exactly."

And that was all that ever passed between them upon the subject of their estrangement. Other people talked a great deal; and when, a few years afterwards, Gould and Harwood had erected their mills upon the river, and were giving employment to a thousand busy hands, these same people remembered that two such men never ought to have been estranged.

THE moral feelings of mankind are so organized, that men must feel towards us according to the moral qualities which we possess.

WIT AND WISDOM.

(ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.)

NO doubt it was easy enough for Democritus to shake his sides at everything, but where could Heraclitus find a supply of tears for everything? May there not have been a mistake about his sex?

BEAR in mind, that, when you are invited by a distinguished man to dinner, you have received payment in full of your long standing account of service.

IF we have a wise foresight, Fortune has for us no divinity. It is we who make her a deity and place her throne in Heaven.

IT is often easier to suborn a false witness against the humble than to find men who dare to speak the truth against the powerful.

LET married people feel their chains, if they must, but take especial care the world shall not hear them clank.

GOVERNMENT is like an hour-glass; when one side is quite run out, we turn up the other and go on again.

THE school birch though in appearance but a dead twig, has undoubtedly budded and borne some excellent fruit.

IF you are a young author, go for advice to the man whose judgment stands constitutionally at the freezing point.

FORTUNES made in no time are like shirts made in no time—it's ten to one if they hang long together.

"I SEE, sir, that you have your teeth full of gold." "Oh, yes, I married a rich wife, and she has been throwing her gold in my teeth."

IT must be a happy thought to a lover that his blood and that of his sweetheart mingle perhaps in the same musquito.

PERHAPS the greatest danger to be apprehended by an honest politician is that he may feel lonesome.

WHEN the Government places a fire-arm in disloyal hands, one of the Government's arms is out of place.

A WOMAN is like tar—melt her, and she will take any form you please.

A MAN never so beautifully shows his own strength as when he respects woman's softness.

THE gorgeous trappings of the dead are but the outward dressings of the pride of weeping survivors.

IT often happens to genius as to spoons, the plated article takes the place of the real metal.

A MAN'S money seldom grows more than half as fast as his love of it.

"THANK God, Madam, I have contracted no bad habits." "No, sir, you have expanded them."

TRUTH is immortal, and a lie sometimes as long-lived as Methuselah.

THE battles, in which a man achieves his noblest life-victories, are fought in solitude.

SOME men are like gardens enclosed by rough stone walls—unsightly without, but beautiful within.

EVERY man knows best when he plays the knave; his neighbors know best when he plays the fool.

"CAN you look me in the face, wife, and say that?" "Yes, I always look *things* in the face."

THE most brutal man has a hogs-head full of brains—such as they are.

A SCOLDING wife is generally a high-toned woman.

THE miser empties his heart into his purse. The student empties his purse into his head.

A YOUNG woman's beau ideal is pretty certain to be exactly like her beau real.

BANKRUPTCIES are getting alarmingly common; even a good many jails have been broken lately.

WHEN a clergyman gives the nod of assent to evil deeds, he assumes the authority of a sin-nod.

SOME editors never tell the truth except when they charge each other with lying.

A SEEDY coat very often covers a heart in full bloom.

CURRENT ITEMS.

A GENTLEMAN from Ohio, who was visiting this city, in company with two sons of the respective ages of eleven and fifteen, being desirous of giving his boys an [illegible] took them on board some of the vessels lying at the wharves, and the youngest of the boys being inspired with the ambition to climb up a rope ladder, and his father giving him permission to do so, he climbed to the main-top, when, becoming giddy, he fell, and would undoubtedly been fatally injured had not a couple of sailors, on deck, in attempting to catch him in their arms, broke his fall.

AS a young Englishman was lately going on board a Hoboken ferry-boat, he acted in such a sly and stealthy manner as to attract the attention of the police, who arrested him, whereupon he begged them to let him go and he would "give up everything." His "everything" consisted of a lot of money and jewelry which he had stolen from a friend; and it being his first crime, he could not help exhibiting such signs of guilt as had betrayed him.

A POLICEMAN arrested an Orange county milkman the other morning, for watering his milk by means of a hose in the public street, but the justice before whom the milk-and-waterman was taken let him go, as he did not know of any law by virtue of which he could punish him. Our legislature should take this fact into consideration, in framing their proposed bill to prevent the adulteration of milk.

A SUIT recently came off in the Supreme Court, King's county, wherein a young man just come of age sought a divorce from his wife, who was some twelve years his senior, on the ground that when he was still a minor he had been entrapped into a marriage with her, by means of a conspiracy between her and others, whereby, among other things, he was sued by her in a criminal action, which could only be settled by his marrying her.

A SERVANT, who was recommended to her employer as "a perfectly honest girl," was arrested lately on a charge of robbing him of nearly fifty dollars in money, which was found stowed away in her trunk. On being questioned, she owned up to the theft, and stated that her recommendations were so good she thought she would never be suspected of taking anything.

A BOY thirteen years of age, while flying his kite from the roof of a house in Baxter street, slipped, and rolling from the roof, fell to the pavement, and was killed. As the poor boy was rolling and sliding to his doom, he grasped frantically at the slippery roof, and shrieked in such agonizing tones as made those who heard him shudder with pain and horror.

AN unknown woman was knocked down and run over by a Second Avenue car, at the corner of Chatham and Oliver streets, one day recently, and was injured so badly it was thought she could not long survive. The driver of the car was arrested and imprisoned to await the result of the unfortunate woman's injuries.

THE dead body of a man was picked up in the Hudson river the other day, the features of which were entirely obliterated, but by papers in the pockets of the deceased's clothing, the body was identified as that of the captain of a North river barge, who was drowned some three months ago.

A HALL thief was arrested the other morning, as he was coming out of a palatial residence on Fifth Avenue, with a large assortment of cloaks and overcoats that he had grabbed from the hat-stand. A policeman happened to be passing just as the rogue came out of the door, and at once nabbed him.

A COUPLE of men got into a quarrel one evening lately at a low place of resort in Baxter street, and one of them drawing a shoe-knife, plunged it into the side of his opponent, and inflicted a wound which occasioned the victim's death in a few hours. The homicide was arrested and imprisoned.

A MAN residing in Church street was found dead in his bed one morning recently, and near him a cup of water containing a large quantity of arsenic; on investigation arsenic was also found in his stomach; verdict, suicide.

A WOMAN living on the fourth floor of a tenement house in Twelfth street, in attempting to shut the window blind, while she was nearly stupefied with rum, lost her balance, fell to the pavement, and was instantly killed.

A LITTLE beggar girl was run over by a cart in Broadway, opposite the City Hall, one day recently, and one of the wheels of the cart passing over her neck, killed her instantly.

NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, APRIL 12, 1862.

WE always stop the LEDGER at the expiration of the year, or the time for which it is paid, so that if you wish to continue it, it would be well to renew your subscriptions at least one week before the time expires.

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LYON---LANDER.

BY HORACE GREELEY.

NATHANIEL LYON—son of a substantial farmer, grandson of an honored soldier of the American Revolution,—was born in the little rural township of Ashford, Conn., July 14, 1819, entered the Military Academy at West Point in 1837, graduated in 1841, and was immediately appointed a second lieutenant of infantry in the regular army; first saw service in the Seminole War in Florida; followed Gen. Scott to Vera Cruz in 1847; distinguished himself, while still only a first lieutenant, at the battle of Cerro Gordo, where he captured three cannon; was brevetted captain for gallantry at the battles of Contreras and Churubusco; was slightly wounded by a spent ball when entering the City of Mexico at the Belen Gate; was sent at the close of the Mexican War to California, where, in 1851, he received his commission as full captain; was transferred with his regiment in 1855 to Kansas, where his observation of the wrongs and outrages endured by the Free-State settlers, at the hands of the Missouri "Border Ruffians," converted him to ardent sympathy with the fortunes and the politics of the former; was in command of the Arsenal at St. Louis when tidings of the bombardment and fall of Fort Sumter agitated Missouri with other Slave States to her profoundest depths, and evoked an instant Military organization, just outside of St. Louis, of those who were ready to fight for Secession and "Southern Rights." A camp was formed, in which many hundreds of volunteers were openly drilled for active service, intending soon to seize St. Louis, and link the fortunes of Missouri with those of the already revolted States.

Capt. Lyon resolved to capture it, and in concert with the Hon. Francis P. Blair, quietly enrolled and armed a considerable volunteer force, composed mainly of the German residents of their city. At the head of this force, he on the 10th of May suddenly surrounded and surprised the rebel camp, taking all who were in it prisoners and crushing out the rebellion in that quarter. Lyon was hereupon made Brigadier General of Volunteers, and at once commenced the pursuit of Gov. Claiborne F. Jackson and Gen. Sterling Price, the most conspicuous of the Missouri traitors, who fled before him to Jefferson City and thence to Booneville, where they had collected three thousand armed men to meet him. The battle having been opened by Capt. Totten's artillery, briskly responded to by the rebels, the infantry soon became engaged; when Lyon, finding the enemy strongly posted, ordered his centre to give ground. The rebels, supposing them beaten, eagerly followed, when Lyon, having drawn them on so far as he thought advisable, ordered his infantry to face about and charge, which they did with complete success, utterly routing the rebels and capturing their cannon, tents and munitions, with large numbers of prisoners, whom he released on their parole not again to be found in arms against the Union. Leaving Booneville on the 3d of July, he marched to Springfield, the chief town of South-Western Missouri, being joined by Major Sturgis and Col. Sigel on the way, and fighting on the 1st of August the battle of Dug Spring, in which he defeated and scattered a rebel force far superior in numbers to his own. But the tidings of the Union disaster and disgrace at Bull Run were just then flashing over the far West, summoning every man or boy of Secession proclivities to horse and to arms, and Lyon found the rebel forces in his front rapidly augmenting in spite of defeat, while his tended to diminish through discouragement at the National aspect and the expiration of the term of enlistment of his three months' volunteers, many of whom, having received no pay and seeing no prospect of any, while the whole horizon was darkened with their ever-increasing foes, very naturally inclined to receive their discharges and go home. To stand still was, therefore, to be speedily surrounded and overwhelmed; to retreat was to incite pursuit and ensure destruction from the quadruple numbers and abundant cavalry of the rebels—Rolla, the nearest point of support, being over a hundred miles away, over a level and thinly peopled prairie, proffering every advantage to pursuers. It was in no fool-hardy spirit, therefore, but in accordance with the dictates of a wise and calm judgment, that Gen. Lyon, after availing himself of the advice of a Council of War, resolved to advance a second time from Springfield toward the South, and with his little army of 5,500 men, mainly volunteers, attack the combined forces of Price and Ben M'Culloch, 23,000 strong, advantageously posted on a sloping ridge at Wilson's Creek, nine miles south of Springfield. He hoped to surprise the enemy; but, though he attacked at daylight, the rebels had been apprised of his approach and were prepared to receive him. A column of one-fifth of his force, detached under Sigel to flank the rebels and fall upon their rear, was promptly confronted by such an immense disparity of numbers that it broke and fled, leaving its guns and wounded to the enemy. Charge after charge was made upon the residue of his little band by the rebels in great force; and, though each was repelled, the fall of each hundred of the Unionists was not counterbalanced by that of double their number of rebels. Lyon, already thrice wounded, had steadily refused to give a moment to the surgeon, but continued in the thickest of the fight, directing and animating his soldiers. The third rebel charge being repulsed, he exhorted his favorite (the First Kansas) regiment to charge with the bayonet. "Who will lead us?" was the cry through the ranks. "I will lead you! Come on, brave men!" responded the heroic chief, and the next moment fell shot through the body. "Lehman, I am killed—take care of my body!" were his last words. And the enemy, though they knew the gallant leader and pride of the scanty and decimated Union army had fallen, had been so severely handled that they did not charge again. Some time afterward, Col. Sigel, finding himself outflanked and in danger of being surrounded by the rebel cavalry, drew back about two miles, and in the course of the night retreated to Springfield; yet the rebels, though fully aware of their immense preponderance in numbers, did not venture to molest him. Nay: when he saw fit at his leisure to fall back to Rolla, covering and protecting the true and loyal inhabitants who fled before the devastating hordes of the enemy, his rear was not harassed, not even by a company of horse, and he reached his destination without hurry and without loss. Such was the moral effect of the battle of Wilson's Creek; not a victory, yet the most creditable and glorious conflict ever sustained by the arms of the Union. And among the hundreds who there joyfully yielded up their lives for the salvation of their country, there is not one who would not insist on giving the first place in the memory and affections of his countrymen to their heroic chief, NATHANIEL LYON.

FREDERICK W. LANDER, a native of Salem, Mass., born in 1823, was only known in his youth as a rough, wild fellow, of decided energy and more than average capacity, which he seemed unable to turn to good account. At length, borrowing forty dollars from a lawyer who had not been his friend, (and of whom he asked but twenty,) he started for the Far West, saying to his creditor, "I mean to *be* something; I know "it is in me, and I mean to bring it out." He was next heard from in the Great American Desert and among the Rocky Mountains with a party engaged in surveying a route for a Pacific Railroad. Some years were spent in these savage solitudes; and in 1857 he was a subordinate in a party exploring and surveying for a shorter and better route across the Plains. In 1858 he led a similar party, and effected a considerable saving upon the previously travelled Overland Trail to Oregon. In 1859, he bridged and otherwise improved the trail aforesaid. The following Winter he spent in Washington, where he was assaulted by W. F. Magraw of Missouri, who came off second best. He acted as second for Hon. John F. Potter of Wisconsin, who was challenged by Roger A. Pryor of Virginia for words spoken in the House. Lander, on behalf of Mr. Potter, proposed a fight with Bowie-knives, which Pryor respectfully declined, and the matter then dropped. On the outbreak of the Southern rebellion, Lander tendered his services to the Government, and served first in Western Virginia as an aid to Gen. M'Clellan, by whom he was highly valued. At the battle of Rich Mountain, he distinguished himself by the most daring bravery. Transferred to the Army of the Potomac, he was engaged in a reconnoissance near Leesburg the day after the battle of Ball's Bluff, and was severely wounded in the leg by a rebel bullet. Weeks elapsed before he could again walk or ride; but so soon as possible, he was again in the saddle, and was prominent in opening a division of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad which had been broken up by the rebels, and was still threatened by them. Having opened the road to Hancock, he made a forced march of twenty-two miles to Blooming Gap, Va., where he surprised and dispersed a rebel "nest," killing thirteen and taking seventy-five prisoners, losing but two of his own men. It was this enterprise which elicited from the Secretary of War the following characteristic letter:

> WAR DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, Feb. 17, 1862.
>
> To Brigadier-General F. W. LANDER:
>
> The President directs me to say that he has observed with pleasure the activity and enterprise manifested by yourself and the officers and soldiers of your command. You have shown how much may be done, in the worst weather and worst roads, by a spirited officer at the head of a small force of brave men, unwilling to waste life in camp when the enemies of their country are within reach. Your brilliant success is a happy presage of what may be expected when the army of the Potomac shall be led to the field by their gallant General.
>
> EDWIN M. STANTON, Secretary of War.

This blow was designed as the prelude to one more important, which was not deemed advisable by his superior, and was therefore forbidden. He wished to enclose the rebel Gen. Jackson between his own force and that of Gen. Banks, and destroy or capture it, and would have done it had the opportunity been afforded him.

But "the sword outwears the sheath." Gen. Lander's health, hitherto robust, was sinking under the combined attacks of his wound, his anxieties, and the incessant exposure and hardships of *his* style of command. On the 2d of March—not two weeks after the receipt of the foregoing testimonial, of which a Field Marshal might be proud, his eyes were closed in death. A brief interval of prostration and delirium—in his own consciousness, perhaps none at all—bridged his passage from the stirring incidents of the tented field to the grander scenes of the life beyond the grave. His robust frame and dauntless spirit yielded not at all to mortal weakness till compelled to yield entirely. "The Guard dies—it does not surrender."

The career of a LYON, a LANDER, impresses us at first with a painful sense of incompleteness. From a world so full of egotists and dastards, how shall we be resigned to spare the truest and bravest? In the agony of a struggle so momentous as ours, where adequate leaders are lamentably few, it seems that we might excusably deplore the Providence that snatches from us the noblest and most devoted, just as our dull perceptions are opening to a full consciousness of their worth. "Abide with us," is the instinctive prayer of human weakness, realizing its need of loftier impulses than its own to pilot it safely through the rocks and whirlpools clustering on every side of its frail bark as it dashes madly over the storm-tossed billows of existence. When our need of heroes is greatest and most keenly felt, why are the few that have been vouchsafed us so abruptly withdrawn?

The true response to these queries imports that we need heroic deaths no less than heroic lives—nay, more: we need the former as incitement to and training for the latter. "Send us," said the impassioned young Barbaroux, in the crisis of the French Revolution, "six hundred men who know how to die!" That is an altitude which many have lived a century without attaining—alas! without even aspiring to. Yet nothing is more essential to preserve the great mass of humanity from losing the little good that is in it. A single noble death may prove the quickening impulse to a hundred noble lives. No living voice in the American Senate to-day speaks to the young heart with half the emphasis of the mighty dead who for sixty years has lain cold and silent in the lonely cemetery of Mount Vernon.

Such careers—glorious, yet to human eyes imperfect—are needed to strengthen and confirm our faith, though they may seem at a superficial glance to weaken it. We need to be frequently, impressively reminded that the true end of life is not temporal success but spiritual perfection—that we are here not to acquire but to BE. He who has attained to his full spiritual stature has lived long enough for himself—when he has demonstrated his attainment, he has lived long enough for mankind. No creature can be necessary to the fulfillment of all the purposes of Him "who is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." But, though but counters in the Divine economy, lofty and true lives are of the highest consequence to us. They teach us that in the order of Providence there is no defeat, no failure; that there the broken column and the ruined arch fulfill the ends of their being; that no generous purpose, no benign aspiration, can possibly fail of its end; and that what to our mole-eyed apprehension seems adversity and discomfiture, is often but the wise and loving discipline which weans from the empty vanities of earth and fits for the sublime realities of Heaven.

TEARS.

Unsophisticated, tender-hearted people are sometimes moved by the tears of others to commit follies of which they have occasion afterward to repent long and bitterly. Far be it from us to depreciate the value of those genuine drops that well up from the heart to the eyes, and have been the signs and symbols of pain and sorrow from the hour when the light of happiness was dimmed in Paradise. But there be counterfeits. The springs of feeling in this case are mechanical. But mechanical tears are not confined to statues. There are thousands of human beings who can work their lachrymal glands at will, and whose tears have no more connection with emotion than the gush of a hydrant or a pump. Nor is this hypocritical accomplishment limited to adults. Give a child what it cries for half a dozen times, and it will begin to understand that upon the exercise of its blubbering powers depends the amount of indulgence it is to receive. Continue this sort of treatment, and the result will be such a development of the weeping and roaring faculty as might well drive the fondest father to the howling wilderness for relief.

But the full grown, thoroughly trained human pump uses the gift of tears with more discretion. The professional beggar-woman, with a hired twin on either arm, and two streams meandering down her dirty cheeks, like the tricklings of a shower over a dusty window-pane, is neither loud nor demonstrative. She is an *artist*, and understands the finer touches of simulated distress. There she stands at your basement door, a ragged and soap-forsaken Niobe, moist of eye and silent of tongue. The borrowed offspring wail pathetically, but not obtrusively. The temporary mother confines herself to the hydrant business, and to that fishy gaze peculiar to the tribe, which is mistaken for the expression of despair by persons unacquainted with the fact that it originates in hypocrisy and gin. Alas! many a dime and dinner for which honest poverty is too proud to ask, falls to the share of such she-crocodiles.

Then there is the bogus "lady who has seen better days," with counterfeit tears in her mild eyes, and forged letters from distinguished personages in her delicate hands. She talks like a book—too much like a book, in fact, to deceive persons of penetration. Credulous people with long purses and soft hearts, are her game. If they have a tenderness for the sex, all the better. The popular tongue furnishes her with the names of persons celebrated for their public and private benefactions. From these she selects her victims, and having learned their addresses through the directory, visits them at their offices, either before the tumult of the business day begins, or about the time it is over. Ah! what a thrilling domestic story she tells, varying it to suit the character of the auditor. How she punctuates it with big round tears, and underlines it here and there with long-drawn sighs, and illustrates it with tragic attitudes and appealing glances. Men are made of penetrable stuff. Some of them have hearts as soft as putty. My uncle Toby found it dangerous to look for the grain of dust that brought the water into the Widow Wadman's eyes. It is the same with other philanthropists. Their world-embracing love of humanity does not render them indifferent to individual misfortune, especially when it pleads to them in musical tones from the lips, and in crystalline gushes from the eyes, of a fascinating woman. The adventuress prevails. Sympathetic tears respond to the crocodile article. The cash drawer is opened. Money, accompanied by a gentle condolent pressure, changes hands. The never-failing pump produces a few drops of liquid thankfulness, and then the lady vanishes through the door, to laugh until real tears come into her eyes as she goes on her way rejoicing.

It would require columns to tell of the thousand ways [illegible] which exemplary people of both sexes, are [illegible] by artificial weepers. Among al[illegible]bjects, there are none who do his work more effectually. If the hypocritical eye-water annually shed in civilized society, could be collected into one great lake, there would probably be enough of it to drown all the true mourners. It cannot be denied that there is "much *virtue* in tears;" but, alas! there is more humbug.

RENTS.

The annual domicile-hunt has commenced, and the "right of visit" is being exercised with unusual spirit. The ladies, however, are by no means satisfied with the results of their labors. They expected to find landlords ready to abate something of the high rents demanded and submitted to before the war. Except in comparatively few instances they have been disappointed. We are sorry to hear it. Real estate owners should bear cheerfully their just share of the existing pressure. And besides, why should rack-rents be asked for *dwelling houses*, when, as we all know, stores and offices can be had at a reduction of from twenty-five to fifty per cent. on the rates of a year ago? The local and federal taxes upon real estate will be very heavy this year, but the landlords cannot screw the amount out of the tenant population, and they may as well abandon the idea. They must either "submit to a decline," or an immense number of houses will be unoccupied. Hundreds of residences up-town have been tenantless for many months, because the owners have insisted upon the same rents they received in more prosperous times. In former years, landlords entertained the notion that they must have ten per cent. on their own valuation of their houses and lots, as rents. They estimated that assessments, repairs, insurance, &c., cut down this gross compensation to about the legal rate of interest—seven per cent. To this method of calculation—as regards dwelling houses—a large proportion of them still adhere. If they continue to do so, irrespective of the stagnation of business, the worse for them. Boarding was never so cheap as it is now, and thousands of families will break up housekeeping in May, and take up their quarters in boarding establishments, unless a very material abatement is made in the rents of houses of every class, before the expiration of the letting season.

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THE CHRISTIAN SOLDIER.—A private in the army writes as follows of his only brother, who had just died in camp of fever:

"I have met with a loss that has left me without a brother—a loss that cannot be made up to me in this world—but I thank God he was prepared to go, and I believe if there is a home of peaceful happiness it will be to a true soldier, one that is true to his God and his country." He adds: "I shall fight for my country: it is not because I think I shall like it, or shall make money out of it, but because I think it is my duty."

To an army composed of such men—animated by a sense of duty to their country, and sustained by unwavering faith in God, victory is certain.

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The poor have little,—beggars none;
The rich too much,—enough not one.

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THE happiness of man arises more from his inward than his outward condition; and the amount of good in the world cannot be much increased but by increasing the amount of goodness.

LOOSE HINTS ON MATTERS OF PROPRIETY AND POLITENESS.

LETTERS SHOULD BE ANSWERED IMMEDIATELY.

A business letter, which requires an answer, should be answered as soon as the subject matter admits. There is no use in putting it off; you will never be more at leisure than you are now. If you write a letter requiring an answer on your own business, you should enclose a stamp for the prepayment of postage. If a letter is enclosed in an envelope, the name of the person to whom it is addressed should be written somewhere upon the letter itself.

SEALS, WAFERS, SELF-SEALING ENVELOPES.

A seal was formerly considered preferable to a wafer for all but business letters. The great convenience of self-sealing envelopes has caused them, to a considerable extent, to take the place both of wafers and wax seals. The latter, however should be used when the contents are of a confidential nature, and a handsome waxen seal gives a highly finished appearance to a letter.

LETTERS OF INTRODUCTION.

A letter of introduction should, as a general rule, be handed to the person introduced unsealed, or furnished with a flying seal. Before it is delivered it should be sealed up, but not with the seal of the person introduced.

It is a good way to leave a letter of introduction with your card. But if you wish to save time, you can send in your letter and card, waiting to see if the person addressed is at home and will receive you.

MORE ABOUT LETTERS OF INTRODUCTION.

Greater latitude prevails here than in the older countries in giving letters of introduction. In Europe it is not thought that, because a man has been kind to you, you have a right to send all your acquaintance and your countrymen generally to share his kindness. The safest course is to apply for your correspondent's consent beforehand to introduce your friends to him. This cannot always be done, but you ought in some way to make pretty sure that you are not taking an unwarrantable liberty. Some people seem to be of opinion that if a person is what is called a "public man," or an author of note, or in any other way distinguished, all the world has a right to be introduced to him.

IS A MAN'S HOUSE HIS CASTLE?

Some persons again seem to think that, if an individual is a "public man," say a cabinet officer, a member of Congress, a candidate, or an author, he forfeits the benefit of the rule that a man's house is his castle. They think that on such personages any man has a right to call, without a letter of introduction or previous acquaintance. This is objectionable for several reasons. It takes up the time of the victim, which, if it does not belong to himself, belongs to the whole public, and not to individuals who choose from curiosity or selfish purposes to occupy it. Besides, how is the unfortunate "public man" to know that the person who calls upon him, without any voucher for his respectability, is not an impostor, an entry thief, or a reporter for a libellous press?

THINGS SENT SHOULD BE PROPERLY WRAPPED UP.

A book, whether bound or unbound, a file of papers, a small article of almost any kind, should never be sent, except in wrapping paper, securely done up and legibly addressed. If the contents of the parcel are very valuable it should be sealed. These precautions are necessary, in order to secure what is sent from being soiled or injured, and to prevent miscarriage. It may be carelessly dropped in the street or left at the wrong door.

Do not be too economical of your wrapping paper and twine. Do up your parcel in a fresh sheet of paper, and let the old pieces of wrapping paper, which have come on parcels received by you, go into the nursery to make kites for the little ones.

SPELL THE NAME CORRECTLY.

Great care should be taken, in the address of letters and parcels, to spell the name correctly. It argues indifference, not to take the trouble to learn precisely what your correspondent's name is. There is nothing of which most persons are more tenacious. Mr. Smythe feels very uncomfortable if you leave out the final letter or write his name Smith.

WRITE YOUR OWN NAME LEGIBLY.

When you are writing to a person who is not acquainted with you, write your own name legibly. Remember that there is no context to enable him to spell out your mysterious characters. Some people resort to these illegible signatures as a security against forgery. They make a great mistake. It is more difficult to detect a skilful imitation of one of these fantastic hieroglyphics than that of a plain characteristic signature.

A SEAL, HOWEVER MADE, IS SACRED.

A seal, whether of wax, wafer, or gluten, should be always held sacred, and never broken, but with the express permission of the person to whom the letter is addressed. No nearness of relationship nor intimacy of friendship authorizes you to take this permission for granted. Nor ought such permission to be lightly given. You have a right to impart your own confidence to a third person, but by allowing your letters to be opened, you may betray that of your correspondent.

LETTERS ARE SACRED.

A letter, either marked "private" or private in its nature, whether so marked or not, is sacred as far as any publicity goes, unless the consent of the writer to make it known can be fairly presumed. To publish it, for the sake of injuring the writer, is the depth of baseness. You have no right even to show it to another, if there is reason to think the writer meant it for your eye alone. You have no right to publish even your own private letter to another person, if in so doing you bring out what he has privately written or said to you.

THE RIGHT OF PROPERTY IN LETTERS.

The right of property in private letters is held to be not in the receiver but in the writer. For this reason, it is said to be the practice in some countries in Europe, when a man of eminence dies, for his heirs to send back to their writers all the letters which he has preserved. Neither the receiver nor his heirs have a right to publish them.

OFFICIAL LETTERS.

Official letters, as a general rule, ought not to be published without the consent of the government, in whose employ or service they are written. In some cases this consent may be safely taken for granted, but in a doubtful case honor and duty require that permission should be obtained.

INVITATIONS.

An invitation to dinner ought immediately to be answered. It is the excess of incivility to leave your host in doubt, whether you will accept his hospitality. Besides, how is he to know that his invitation has not miscarried? How is he to fill your vacant place, if you fail to inform him that you cannot come, or do so at the last moment?

When it is of no great consequence whether you come or not, as in the case of large parties, the usage varies. Some persons, from politeness, immediately answer the invitation. Others leave it unanswered till the last moment, and then only send an answer if in the negative, leaving it to be presumed that they will come if they possibly can. Where cards are issued to the "dear five hundred," it is a great saving of labor to your host's household not to send answers of acceptance. Some persons reserve a negative answer and send it in the form of apology the next day. These are little conventional forms; but an answer, either by personal appearance or in writing, should be returned to every invitation of every kind.

A PRESENT SHOULD ALWAYS BE ACKNOWLEDGED.

A present, however slight, should always be promptly acknowledged, either in writing or by word of mouth. It is as uncivil to omit a note of thanks for a present sent, as an oral acknowledgment for a present made in person. After a suitable interval, and when it will not look like paying a debt, some present should be made in return, unless such an inequality of circumstances exists, as warrants the acceptance of an unrequited favor.

PRESENT OF A BOOK BY THE AUTHOR.

When an author presents you a copy of his book, not a moment should be lost in acknowledging it. If you mean, after reading it, to express your opinion of its merits, you can intimate this intention. When you come to do so, there will be a great temptation to say civil things, which, however, prudence as well as morality forbids your doing unless you can do it conscientiously. It is a very objectionable practice, in which "public men" are too apt to indulge, to write commendatory letters of books of little or no value, or which they have not read.

If an author presents you his work, and it is one which you would yourself have bought, had it not been presented to you, buy it nevertheless, and give the spare copy to some public library, or some friend who cannot afford to buy it. The author has done enough in showing you his good will, and it is delicate in you to divide with him the expense of his generosity.

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AN ORIGINAL LETTER FROM GENERAL WASHINGTON.

The following highly interesting original letter from General Washington is believed never to have been published. The name of the person to whom it was written does not appear upon the letter, but it is clear from internal evidence, that it must have been addressed to Mrs. Martha Custis, the lady to whom he had been for some months engaged, and to whom he was married on the 6th of January following. Bearing this relation of the parties in mind, the formal style of address and the old school politeness at the beginning and in the latter portion of the letter are characteristic of the Times and of the Man. The handwriting is scrupulously neat and careful.

E. E.

CAMP AT RAYS TOWN, *25th Septr.*, 1758.

DEAR MADAM:—Do we still misunderstand the true meaning of each others Letters? I think it must appear so, tho' I would feign hope the contrary as I cannot speak plainer without—but I'll say no more, and leave you to guess the rest.

I am now furnish'd with News of a very Interesting nature, I know it will affect you but as you must hear it from others I will state it myself. The 12th past then, Major Grant with a chosen Detachment of 800 Men Marchd from our advanced Post at Loyal Hannan against Fort Du-quesne.—On the Night of the 18th he arrivd at that place, or rather upon a Hill near to it; from whence went a Party and viewd the Works, made what observation's they coud, and burnt a Logd House not far from the Walls—Egg'd on rather than satisfied by this success, Major Grant must needs Insult the Enemy next Morning by beating the Reveille in different places in view, this causd a great Body of Men to Sallie from the Fort & an obstinate Engagement to ensue, which was maintaind on Our Side with the utmost efforts that bravery coud yield, till being overpower'd and quite Surrounded they were obligd to Retreat with the loss of 22 Officers killd and 278 Men besides wounded.

This is a heavy blow to our Affairs here, & a sad stroke upon my Regiment, that has lost out of 8 Offic[illegible] and 168 that was in the Action, 6 of t[illegible] killd [illegible] 7th Wounded—and 62 of the latter killd besides wounded. Among the Slain was our dear Major Lewis;—thi[illegible] Gentleman as the other Officers also did, bravely fough[illegible] while they had life, tho wounded in different places.—Your old acquaintance Capt'n Bullett, who is the only Officer of mine that came of untouchd, has acquird immortal honour in this Engagement by his gallant behaviour and long continuance in the field of Action.—It might be thought vanity in me to praise the behaviour of my own People were I to deviate from the report of common Fame.—but when you consider the loss they have sustaind, and hear that every mouth resounds their praises, you will believe me Impartial.

What was the great end proposd by this attempt, or what will be the event of its failure, I cant take upon me to determine; it appears however (from the best Accts) that the Enemy lost more Men than we did in the Engagement.—Thus it is the Lives of the brave are often disposd of—but who is there that does not rather Envy, than regret a Death that gives birth to Honour & Glorious memory.

I am extremely glad to find that Mr. Fairfax has escap'd the Dangers of the Siege at Louisburg.—Already have we experienced greater Losses than our Army Sustaind at that place, and have gaind not one obvious Advantage.—So miserably has this Expedition been managd, that I expect after a Months farther Tryal, and the loss of many more Men by the Sword, Cold, and Perhaps Famine, we shall give the Expedition over as Impracticable this Season and retire to the Inhabitants condemnd by the World, and derided by our Friends.—I shoud think my time more agreable spent believe me, in playing a part in Cato with the Company you mention, & myself doubly happy in being the Juba to such a Marcia as you must make.

Your agreable Letter containd these words.—"My Sis-"ters & Nancy Gist who neither of them expect to be "here soon after our return from Town, desire you to ac-"cept their best Complimts, &c."—Pray, are these Ladies upon a Matrimonial Scheme?—Is Miss Fairfax to be transformd into that charming Domestick—a Martin.—and Miss Cary to a Fa-re.—What does Miss Gist turn to —A Cocke—that cant be we have him here.

One thing more and then have done. you ask if I am not tird at the length of your Letter?—No Madam I am not, nor never can be while the Lines are an Inch assunder to bring you in haste to the end of the Paper. you may be tird of mine by this.—Adieu dear Madam, you possibly will hear something of me, or from me before we shall meet. I must beg the favour of you to make my Compliments to Col° Cary & the Ladies with you, & believe that I am most unalterably

Yr Most Obedt. & Oblig'd,
Go. WASHINGTON.

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MIDNIGHT HOURS.

There are few things more painful than the monotonous tick of a watch or clock to the wakeful ear at midnight. The slow record of the passing minutes becomes at last an exquisite torture. Particularly is this true of the watcher by the sick bed. One listens to it then as to some dread sentence of doom, from which there is no appeal. How welcome, then, the cheering morning light, or the first sound which breaks the dread stillness. And how many weary ones in this great city of ours say nightly, "would God it were morning."

FANNY FERN.

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THE CAUSE OF THE ENORMOUS AND UNPARALLELED CIRCULATION OF THE LEDGER.—We pay more money for contributions by popular and eminent writers, in order to make a great and good paper, than is paid by any ten other literary papers in the country; and, as a legitimate result, our circulation is larger than the combined circulation of any ten others.

MARCHING SONG.

BY ALICE CARY

Unloop the tents from the tent-poles,
Hands that are knotty and strong!
And yoke the teams to the gun-wains,
And drag the guns along!
And form into line, good fellows of mine,
To right our country's wrong.

Let rebels beat into ploughshares
Their swords, as we're marching on,
Or we'll count them as altar-horns, the which
Our victims shall bleed upon!
Step quick into line, good fellows of mine,
For the time of rest is gone!

By God's good grace, our eagle
Shall keep his place in the sky!
The world would swing a century back
If he in the dust should lie;
His great proud heart all cloven apart,
And the film of death in his eye.

The precious blood of the fathers
Maketh our flag so bright;
Then bear it aloft with every star
And every stripe in sight!
And each gunner tread with his hand on the head
Of his gun, to the field of fight.

Careless of ribbons or roses,
To stick in our bosoms are we;
Young Ishmaels sprung from the bushes
And nursed in the wild, we agree
That never a band of spangles can stand
For the manhood of men, soul-free.

Unloop then the tents from the tent-poles,
Take cross-beams and side-props, and all;
The wind is trampling before us,
And piping like Abner to Saul;
So step into line, good fellows of mine,
In honor to stand, or fall.

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THE SECRET CYPHER;

OR,

MYSTERY OF A LIFETIME.

BY LIEUT. HENRY L. LANGFORD,

AUTHOR OF "THE TRIAD; OR, ARNOLD THE TRAITOR."

CHAPTER XVI.

Shortly afterwards a visitor requested to see Miss Rawdon.

It was Judah Murdock.

Her careworn look and heart-broken expression might have softened any other than he. But softness was not a part of his nature, and in this case, certainly he could not have relented in favor of a hated rival.

"You are surprised to see me, Miss Rawdon."

"I am, indeed."

"My business with you can easily be guessed. I came over in the packet. I suppose you also received letters."

"I did."

"Then you know all."

"Yes," said Leila, faintly.

"You must see how great the danger is. Nothing can avert it without my permission. You see now that I did not exaggerate. Your blind confidence in the innocence of Blount Aymar has indeed been fatal to him."

"I confide in his innocence yet."

"Then you will see him perish?"

"I cannot believe it."

"You will soon know it. No one now has a doubt of his guilt. Circumstances are all against him. The actions of his subsequent life, so far from exonerating him, only go to prove his guilt."

"I believe that there is a God in Heaven, and He will not let the innocent suffer."

"That is a very bad principle," said Judah, with a sneer. "For even if Blount were innocent, he could have but faint hopes of the interposition of Providence. In my brief experience I have found that in this world the innocent suffer as well as the guilty. And in this case, even if he is as innocent as a child, nothing can save him."

"You at least have done all that you could to destroy him."

"I will not deny it. Apart from any little personal motives, you must be aware that it is the duty of every true man to protect and to avenge the innocent. If I believe Blount Aymar to be the author of a horrid crime, it is but right that I should seek to have him punished."

Leila was silent.

"I wish you to have a clear and distinct idea of the danger he is in."

"I know too much already."

"It is more important for you to know this than any other living person."

"If you come again to try and tempt me, I tell you at once that your efforts are utterly useless. I am unchanged. I have given my heart to one, and I cannot be frightened or persuaded into giving my hand to another."

"Will you not even listen to me then?" said Judah, his face exhibiting a perfect tempest of evil passions.

"Speak on. Time passes drearily with me, and any conversation is better than my own thoughts."

"The only hope that the friends of Blount Aymar now have is the faint one that perhaps he may be saved from death. They will try to have his sentence commuted. As to the certainty of his being condemned, no one doubts it for a moment."

Leila shuddered.

"You can save him."

She turned paler than ever.

"In either case, you cannot be united to Cyril. Look at this matter calmly and fairly. Your union with him now is a matter of utter impossibility. Whether you save his father or not, you cannot be joined to him. You must give him up."

"Never."

"You may carry him in your thoughts, and make your life miserable by doing so; but remembrance will not avail to bring him to you. Overwhelmed with dishonor, he will fly from his native land, and you will never hear of him again."

"Then I can carry his memory forever, and we can meet in a better world."

"There's not much comfort in that prospect, I imagine," sneered Judah.

"There may not be to such as you; but to me it brings hope and support."

"Since you cannot possibly hope to be united to Cyril," continued Judah, in a cool manner, "it is evident that the only thing remaining for you to do, is to see what course may be the best for him. There are two modes of action before you. One is to continue as you are, and let him perish; the other, to come forward and save him from ruin."

"My mind is fixed. There is only one course," said Leila, mournfully.

"Think of his father."

"I think of my plighted faith."

"His own life depends upon this."

"His own life would be worthless to him were I to betray him."

"That is a childish fancy. Time will roll on, your image will vanish from his memory, and at last he will bless you for rescuing him from ruin."

"Never, never. He would justly curse me till his dying day."

"You are too romantic. Such a fancy may do for poetry, but for real life it is ridiculous."

"No more so than any other pure and sacred sentiment. All virtue may be alike ridiculous to you."

"Virtue. Is there any virtue in saving a friend from death?"

"Is there any virtue in saving him through dishonor?"

"Dishonor! Nonsense!"

"It is nothing else than the foulest dishonor."

"Some day you will bitterly lament your girlish fastidiousness."

"At least I will never lament my falsity."

"If Cyril were here, with these things presented to him, he would desire you to comply with my proposal. Shame might prevent him from saying it in words; but in his inmost soul he would cry: 'Save me! Save me! Leila!'"

"If Cyril were here," said Leila, with a burst of enthusiasm, "you well know that he would hurl you out of the window, for daring to come here with such a proposal."

"Not he. He would have too much sense. Do you think he likes the prospect of being disgraced for life?"

"God will give him strength if it comes to that."

"You may perhaps have a secret thought that even at the worst Cyril and you may not be parted. You are undoubtedly willing to overlook his disgrace, and if he came to ask you, you could without doubt unite your fate with his."

"Most certainly," said Leila. "On him there is no stain."

"But did it never strike you that he would feel differently? Do you think he would return to you if his father died a felon's death? He is too sensitive and proud, and the execution of his father would also be the destruction of your hopes."

"I know that too well," murmured Leila.

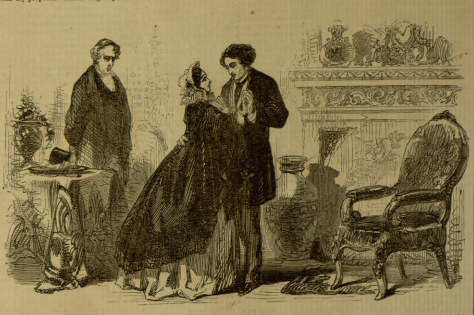
"And yet you refuse."

"And yet I refuse."

"Is there no possible hope? Must Blount Aymar die?"

"There is no hope from me."

"Alas, then," exclaimed Judah, rising, "my plan is overthrown. I began all this, not to destroy Blount Aymar, but to win you. I love you, and all my life I will remember you, cruel as you are. You now refuse me, and by that refusal you not only doom Blount Aymar to death, but you bid me go and become his destroyer. Henceforth you will have to mourn over the evil consequences of your obstinacy; and know, all your life, that by your madness, you have doomed Blount to death, Cyril to grief, and me to the destruction of my friend."



CYRIL AND HIS BETROTHED.

"Base hypocrite!" cried Leila, all carried away by a burst of indignant feeling, "am I a fool to be talked to in such a way. Do you not know that you yourself originated all this scheme, and have plotted the destruction of the noblest man that lives? But you will live to weep tears of blood over your crime. Remorse will haunt you while you live, the images of your ruined friends will never leave you. Go.—But stay one moment; I have only mentioned my faith to Cyril as the cause of my rejection of you. But now I tell you this, that even if I had no engagement with him, even if I were free in my affections, and had never seen him, I would reject you with scorn and contempt. I look upon you as the basest of men; your malice and wickedness belong to fiends, and not to human beings. Rather than unite myself to one like you, I would die a hundred deaths of agony. Depart; you bring a curse with you wherever you go. From this time, I refuse to see you."

She turned and left the room.

Judah stood transfixed. Leila's wrath had made her indescribably lovely. Never before had he seen her enraged. Her scorn and contempt overwhelmed him. He was mute.

At this moment the Judge entered.

Murdock hastened to the door.

"One moment," said the Judge, haughtily. "Your recent course against Blount Aymar marks you out as the vilest wretch that breathes. Infamous man, are there no bounds to your villainy and effrontery? You come with your propositions to my noble-hearted child. You come to torment her, and to let her know that she is the cause of all this. Am I nothing? Is my permission anything? Besotted fool! if my daughter could be base enough to listen to you, I would destroy her rather than suffer you to gain her.

"The brood of vipers is not extinct," cried the Judge, with deep meaning in his gaze. "You have begun all this on an uncertainty. You have not counted the cost. In the first place, do you know what it is to attempt to barter away your testimony, or your knowledge of crime, after the criminal is imprisoned? You cannot know it. But beware! The avenger is on your path!"

"Let him come," cried Judah, interrupting the Judge. "I don't care what may be done to me. Blount Aymar at least shall die."

"He shall not die!" cried the Judge.

"He shall die!" roared Judah, with an oath.

"You confide in the strength of your testimony and the proofs that you can bring forward. But there are other things that you have never taken into account."

"What things?" said Judah, startled by the Judge's manner, which evinced a calm confidence and almost exultation.

"Do you think I will tell you?"

"You have nothing to bring forward."

"If I told you what I know you would tremble," said the Judge, sternly.

Judah laughed.

"I give you warning now. This much I will tell you: If you go on in this trial, you will bring down upon yourself a terrible destruction. There are certain reasons why I would not wish to see you ruined, not for your own sake, but for the sake of others, and I give you this warning now. If you are wise, you will quit the country now, and never return."

"Do you think that vague threats like these can benefit Blount Aymar's case?"

"I have little hope that you will change your course. I do my duty in warning you. Yet beware. I have not lived sixty years for nothing. I have not been intimate with the family of the Aymars all my life for nothing. Have I no testimony to give?"

"None at all," cried Judah. "You have nothing to say. The case is too clear. The murder was done. Your knowledge can only injure Blount Aymar. It cannot save. I wish you a very good morning," and with mock politeness Judah bowed and departed.

CHAPTER XVII.

After leaving Leila, Judah Murdock walked down to his father's house. It was desolate and quiet. As he entered, the servants stared in surprise, but he took no notice of them. He walked at once to the library.

His father was there seated in his arm-chair. He looked more feeble than ever before. The weary expression of his face had deepened; his whole manner was more languid and dejected.

"His son walked up to him, and came close to him before the old man noticed him. When he saw him he gave a start and a cry.

"No use making such a fuss," growled Judah. "You ought to know me well enough by this time, I should think."

"Judah!"

"Yes, Judah."

The old man rose to his feet with an energy that was wonderful.

"Judah!" he almost shrieked, "you have opened the *escritoire*."

"Well," rejoined the other, "and what then?"

"You took some papers?"

"Yes."

"Villain! Robber! Thief!" shrieked the old man, in a kind of frenzy. "Midnight assassin——"

"If you abuse me in that style, I'll go," said Judah, coolly.

"Restore to me those papers."

"What in the world are you making such a disturbance for? The papers were worthless trash."

"Trash! Would that they were!" groaned the old man.

"What else can they be?"

"More than it concerns you to know."

"Then drop the subject. If you tell me what they are, I will give them back."

"Villain! do you dare to talk in that way to me? I ask you once for all, give them back."

"And what if I decline?"

"Decline?" said the old man, with a hoarse laugh. "You had better try it. You speak as though you are altogether independent of me. Perhaps you have sufficient property for your moderate wishes. Perhaps you would take it as a favor if I made over my own wealth in trust for a hospital."

"No fear of that,' said Judah.

"No fear," cried the old man. "You had better not go too far."

"It would be as well for you to be equally cautious."

"Once for all, will you give up those papers?"

"No."

"Then I will disinherit you."

Judah looked blank. Never before had he seen his father so determined and so fierce. He felt that he had gone too far.

"You needn't be so confoundedly fierce," said he, after a pause. "You will not listen to reason."

"What have you got to say?"

"Why, this: I once opened the escritoire, and happened to see these papers——"

"And pray how did you open it?"

"With false keys," said Judah, boldly.

"Strange, too," murmured the old man. "And pray how did you happen to see these papers?"

"Well, I would not have noticed them except for a secret slide——"

"A secret slide! You discovered it, did you? You were very acute, my son," said the old man, bitterly.

"I was naturally struck by the care with which they were kept, and so I was curious to know what they meant."

"The worse for you," said the old man.

"I had not time to read more than the letters. I took a copy of the cypher and studied it over afterward."

"And could not understand it, of course."

"You are wrong," said Judah, slowly; "I did understand it."

The old man rushed up to his son in a kind of frenzy. He caught him by the neck. His eyes seemed starting from his head. For a moment he could not speak. At last he slowly ejaculated:

"Do you mean to say that you found it out?"

"I did."

"And do you know what it means?"

"I do."

Old Murdock sank back in his chair. There he lay for a moment lifeless and motionless. At last he started up, and in a terrible voice he called upon his son.

"Where are those papers now?"

"I did not think you would get so excited," said Judah, "or I would not have told you."

"Tell me all—quick!"

"Afterwards I went to the escritoire and obtained the originals."

"Have you got the originals now?"

"No."

"Where are they?"

"In Walton."

"Walton!" screamed the old man. "Who has them?"

"The magistrates."

"The magistrates," he repeated, now almost voiceless through intense emotion. "How did they get them?"

"I gave them up."

"And is all this rumor true—this terrific rumor that for days past has gone from mouth to mouth, that Blount Aymar is on trial for murder?"

"It is true."

"And is it true," he screamed, with greater vehemence, "that the old man Ford is one of the witnesses against him?"

"Yes."

"Oh, God!" groaned old Murdock, in an intensity of emotion that amazed Judah. "It is all true—too true. These rumors floated to my ears. In vain have I shut them out. In vain have I fled from them. All has been communicated to me. I know it. I am told it by my own son. I have imprisoned myself in my house, and have forbidden any one to speak to me; I have ordered my servants to keep away from me those infernal newspapers, but all is in vain. I see it everywhere—the terrific, the withering news. It comes to me in papers rolled around my parcels, it floats to me from the gossip of the servants' hall. And you, accursed wretch!" he cried, turning to his son; "you are the cause of all this."

Judah witnessed his father's emotion in a kind of bewilderment. He could not understand it. But he reflected that his father was exceedingly nervous, and at present very weak, so that the slightest thing excited him. For years he had been subject to the heart disease, and now this affection distressed him more than usual. To this Judah attributed his father's excitement.

"Tell me, miserable wretch!" he sternly asked, "tell me, were you forced on to this, or did you do it of your own accord?"

"Of my own accord."

"Did you begin it?"

"Yes, I only."

"You! Just Heaven! And how did you become connected with Ford?"

"I sought him out."

"And are you still taking an active part?"

"I am."

"What are the prospects of this trial now?"

"There is not a doubt but that Blount Aymar will be condemned and executed for murder."

Old Murdock caught his son's arm and reeled. Judah supported him, or he would have fallen headlong to the floor. He dragged him to his chair and laid him in it. The old man pressed his hand to his heart and looked at his son with a ghastly expression.

After some time he regained strength. Then he spoke in low and feeble tones.

"Wretched boy," he said, "you do not know what you are doing. I warned you long ago. But you would not head my words.

"Blount Aymar must not die. If you continue this, I will disinherit you. I will curse you on my deathbed. I will cut you off so completely that you will be left for the remainder of your days to hopeless poverty.

"He is a good and a noble man. He shall not die. There is only one thing for you to do to escape my curse."

"What is that?" said Judah, gloomily.

"Fly, and leave this country forever. Blount must not die. He shall not die."

"He appears to be very interesting to you," said Judah.

"You know nothing at all. Do as I bid you. Return—no. Fly, leave the country, and do not show your face here till I send for you."

All the malignant passions that raged in Judah's heart glowed upon his face as he rose from his seat.

"Never! never! never!" he cried. "That man dies, whatever be the consequences."

He left the room.

Old Murdock gazed fixedly at the door as it closed after his son. Then he sank down exhausted. His eyes fixed in a terrified stare, his white lips moving slowly as he muttered,

"Lost! lost! lost!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

After Judah Murdock had departed, the judge sought his daughter. She had flung herself upon a sofa, and was weeping in an agony of sorrow.

"Leila."

"Father," said she, mournfully, looking up.

"My poor child, your grief will kill you."

"I cannot help it," exclaimed Leila, with a burst of tears.

"My dearest daughter, I think I can venture to say that there are no grounds for this excessive fear."

"What! Oh, dear father, is it possible that there is any hope?"

"Do not be too sanguine, Leila. Be calm. The proofs against Blount are strong."

Leila's countenance fell.

"But still his case is not desperate. I have given all my attention to the matter, in full conviction of his innocence, and I begin to hope that all is not yet lost."

"You would not encourage me, I know, without reason," said Leila, hopefully.

"You know, Leila, all my life has been passed amid cases like these, and from such an experience it is not difficult to get a faculty of penetrating to the very core of a mystery. Circumstances have favored me. Perhaps, also, nature has given me a clear understanding."

"Oh, father, if you speak this way I cannot fear."

"I do not tell you to be confident, Leila. I merely say, Hope."

These few words of the judge had wrought a great effect on Leila. It was not the language, so much as the tone in which he spoke, that impressed her. He appeared calm, self-reliant and confident. His words infused strength into mind and body. The judge was gratified by the effect which his cheerful words produced. He proceeded in the same tone:

"Blount Aymar is as innocent as a child of this crime."

"I knew it all along."

"But he is in danger."

"Alas!"

"The monomania of John Ford makes him a dangerous witness to be produced in this case. He will recollect everything. He has fixed upon Blount, with some reason, I confess, as the destroyer of his child, and every thought that he now has will tend toward confirming him in that belief. I doubt not but that he has recalled a thousand things which will have the effect of fixing this crime on poor Blount. Then, again, there is Judah Murdock, inspired with his jealousy and venomous hate. That man is untiring. Every effort that can be made he will exert toward ruining Blount. I have watched his insidious course thus far, and I have seen him succeed in transferring the entire sympathy of the Walton people from Blount to Ford. He is indeed a dangerous enemy."

"And what can be done?" said Leila, anxiously.

"I must not tell you my plans yet, my dear child. After all, they may not succeed."

"Oh, I know well that if you attempt to help Blount Aymar, he will be saved," cried Leila, proudly.

"Do not be too sanguine, darling child," said the judge, affectionately. "I will be able to do something, I trust. And in order to do this, it will be necessary for me to go to Walton."

"To Walton. Oh, my dear father, how you rejoice my heart. To Walton? then all will be well."

"I must see Blount Aymar first; then I must see his counsel. I hope that I will enable them to see this affair in a new light. Judah Murdock's persecution and John Ford's mania must not be lost sight of, and who can say that it is not all a plot from beginning to end? The hat, the bones, everything, in fact, may have been deposited there by Judah Murdock himself, for the especial purpose of afterwards exhuming them. Thus it can be shown that Murdock had sufficient reason to contrive this scheme, and sufficient malice to carry it out. His subsequent course will all show this. He may have found some articles which could be buried in a convenient place, and then, with this old man's help, he dug them up again. The half crazy old man would at once believe that they belonged to his daughter, so that this would not be sufficient."

"But, father," said Leila, sadly, "Judah Murdock has other things—papers and letters for example."

"It may be shown that these were forged; Murdock must prove them to be authentic, and that I imagine will be difficult."

"But suppose all this is done, and everything proved against Blount Aymar?"

"Ah, in that case," said the judge, with a glance of the deepest meaning, "we must try another mode."

"Have you another in view?"

"Yes."

"What is it?"

"It will not do to tell it, Leila."

"Then I will wait patiently. But which plan is the most promising one?"

"Both promise well. But if the first plan fails, the last will be more successful."

"Do you think, then, that Blount is safe?"

"I would not like to say so—absolutely."

"There is still danger?"

"Of course."

"Oh, how anxiously I shall wait to hear from Walton!"

"No, my child, you will not."

"Why?"

"Because you will be in Walton."

"What!" exclaimed Leila, in unutterable joy and wonder.

"You are so pale and miserable, my poor child, that I have not the heart to leave you behind. A change of air will do you a world of good. A voyage on the water will bring back all your vanished bloom. I'm going to take you with me."

Long before the judge had ceased speaking, Leila was sobbing with delight in his arms.

"But come, make haste," he cried. "You have not much time now to waste. Hurry and pack up your trunk, so that we need not miss the vessel."

Leila bounded off with something of her olden life and spirit.

CHAPTER XIX.

The judge always stopped at the house of Blount Aymar when he visited Walton, and now, immediately upon his arrival, he drove there. It was very early, and Cyril was at home. The servants carried in their baggage, but Cyril did not make his appearance. He had seen the coach drive up, but in his deep trouble he had scarcely given it a thought.

At last one of the servants came and told him that Judge Rawdon was below.

"Judge Rawdon!" he repeated. In an instant he was down stairs. The Judge was in the hall. His cheerful face encouraged Cyril greatly.

"Oh, Judge Rawdon," cried Cyril, with irrepressible anxiety, "can anything be done?"

"I hope so," said the judge, with the same peculiar tone which he had used on a former occasion.

Cyril noticed it, and was infinitely relieved.

"The judge would not come unless he was able to do something," he thought. "And what may not be hoped from his intervention. Hope! I will hope everything; and since the time that decides my fate is so near, I will pass the remainder of it in hoping."

"Cyril," said the judge, "step in here a moment," and he entered the parlor.

There, by the door, her face suffused with blushes, her eyes lighted up with joy, stood his own Leila. With a cry of delight he folded her in his arms.

"I had to bring her over for a change of air," said the judge, playfully. "I expect that Walton will do her much good. But I must go and see your father. You need not visit him till I return."

So saying he departed.

His whole manner inspired hope. The servants all noticed it, and communicated to each other the joyful tidings that Judge Rawdon had come to Walton to save master.

"Oh, Leila," said Cyril, "he speaks and looks as though there is hope!"

"He says there is, but tells me also not to be sanguine."

"What does he rely on?"

Leila told him what her father had related to her.

"Well, he seems to depend on this, and he knows better than we do. I hope—and I will be patient. My darling! I can bear anything now that you are here."

Meanwhile the judge went to visit his friend. Blount received him with eager joy. He could not conceal the pleasure that he felt.

"You have not been carried away, then, by public opinion?" said he.

"No—I know you too well, and have known you too long."

"Things look badly."

"They do indeed."

"Have you thought over these circumstances?"

"I have thought of nothing else ever since your arrest," said the judge.

"I do not blame people for thinking me guilty," said Blount. "Appearances are so frightfully against me. Have you decided on any plan?"

"I have," said the judge. "My idea is to prove that it is a conspiracy on the part of Judah."

"Ah!"

"His malevolence has been so apparent, that this will not be impossible to prove. The hat, and the remains, and all the papers might be proved false, and got up skilfully for the occasion."

"It will be difficult to do this."

"No. They must prove that these are authentic. The difficulty is theirs. The witnesses consist of a chief conspirator and his ally—a half crazy old man."

"There may be a hope in this," said Blount. "It will be a sad acquittal, however."

"Can you hope for a better one?"

"No."

"You might escape if you could disclose the whole."

"But I cannot."

"I respect your reasons, but I must say you carry this matter too far."

"I can do nothing else," said Blount. "But your plan scarcely can succeed."

"Why not?"

"Because Judah Murdock has papers that carry in themselves the proof of their authenticity."

"How do you know?"

"I conjecture so."

"Were such papers in existence?"

"Such papers were, and I am afraid that they have come into his possession."

"You think, then, that he will be able to prove their authenticity?"

"I believe that he will."

The judge sat lost in thought.

"Blount," said he, familiarly, "we have been acquainted—indeed we have been intimate friends from childhood."

"We have, Cyril; and I named my boy after you."

"I know your character well—better, perhaps, than you do yourself. I have been familiar with nearly all the events of your life. I have also been in constant connection with criminal cases. The disappearance of Emily Ford thrilled me at the time, and it has been a favorite occupation of mine ever since to study out this problem."

Blount looked at the judge with undisguised curiosity, wondering where all this conversation tended.

"I believe," continued the judge, "that I have about as much penetration as the average of men. You and I have associated for thirty years. We have talked of Emily Ford. In spite of your self-restraint you could not conceal from me the fact that you knew all about her mysterious fate!"

Blount turned pale, and clasped his hand tightly around the chair.

"Moreover," said the judge, "from casual remarks of yours, I have discovered certain things. You did not love her, but another did."

"My God!" exclaimed Blount, "have you known this?"

"For years. But Emily Ford loved you."

Blount said not a word.

"I am too familiar with guilt of every degree and description not to detect its presence. I know well how to distinguish between the secret of a quiet conscience and the secret of a haunted mind. Yours, Blount, was the secret of a quiet conscience. On you there rested no load of crime. I know that. You might have known of the fate of Emily Ford, but you had no hand in it."

"True as sunlight," said Blount, in deep agitation.

"It would need one who was familiar with all your life to penetrate this, and that one was I. Yet it was only a few days since that I came to the knowledge of it all.

"I heard of the fearful charge and the terrible array of proof that sustained it. You were silent under it all. No explanation was given to your friends. No sign came from you. You let public opinion turn against you and you prepared to die. You could tell the name of the murderer. Why did you not?

"Between that murderer and you there must have been close relations. Moreover, that man still lived—else why keep the secret and endanger your life and the hopes of your son? Rather than speak you would receive unutterable infamy. All these I thought of. One thing explained another. Other mysteries came and melted into this. I suddenly saw in this the key to them all. Do I speak in riddles, Blount?"

"You are intelligible to me," said Blount, whose face was as pale as death.

"I know all," said the judge.

"God bless you! God bless you!" cried Blount, and grasping the hand of the judge, he burst into tears.

"Heaven has revealed it. It was no act of yours. The blood of the innocent cries out for vengeance. Let justice be done to the guilty."

"Amen!" exclaimed Blount, fervently.

"You are not willing, then, still to offer yourself up for another?"

"No; for he has proved himself to be utterly unworthy of the sacrifice."

"Yes, let him suffer," cried the judge. "It was his, to atone for the past by heroism equal to yours. His crime could have been forgotten in the lustre of a noble devotion. But his coward nature quailed. He sits calmly by and allows you to suffer in his stead. Worthless as he is, let him now receive his doom, and descend into a dishonored grave with the execrations of mankind."

"Oh, my friend!" cried Blount. "You have saved me. This sudden revulsion of feeling is too much. Hope comes, and despair is turned to joy."

And that calm and self-possessed nature, which stood unmoved amid calamity and affliction, now gave way to the sudden rush of happiness.

The strong man buried his face in his hands, and wept aloud. With an exulting heart, the judge retired, unwilling to intrude upon such a scene.

CHAPTER XX.

The day at last came, the dread time of trial. The city was full of wild excitement. The prominence of the accused, his long life of uprightness and integrity, his generous and noble nature, the dark mystery of the murdered girl, the life-long sorrow of the father, all these contributed to intensify the common feeling.

From the moment that the court-house was opened it was filled to overflowing. The spectators crowded every part, and then low murmurs arose on high in one indistinguishable tumult.

At length the prisoner appeared. Calm, cool, collected, he looked around upon the vast assemblage with an air of perfect ease, nor did the slightest trace of any kind of emotion show itself upon his face. Many were the remarks which were elicited by his undaunted bearing. Some attributed it to his innocence, but by far the greater part of the spectators saw in this only additional proofs of his brazen and unblushing effrontery.

There, in close proximity to his father, was Cyril. Care-worn and anxious, he watched the proceedings, feeling that all his future depended upon the issue. Leila was left behind, for the thrilling scenes of this trial were not the kind which she could witness without too painful emotions. There, too, was the judge; quiet, self-contained, watchful of everything, and only looking away from the scene before him to see the bearing of his friend.

At length the trial opened with the customary preliminaries.

The first witness was John Ford, the father of the young girl.

At his appearance a murmur went around the court. His venerable face, marked with deep traces of care and sorrow, his gray hairs, and melancholy voice, all excited the utmost sympathy for his cause.

He told about his daughter.

Her beauty and her gentle character. When he came to recount the story of her disappearance, emotion overcame him. He leaned forward, and sobbed aloud. A shudder went through the assembly, and Blount Aymar hid his face.

He went on to tell of his fruitless search, continued through long years, and finally told about his connection with Judah Murdock. That person had come to him secretly, and offered to show him where his daughter had been buried. They went. The place had evidently been undisturbed for years. In the remains which were found he recognized his daughter.

The remains were brought in court, and a thrill of horror passed through the assembly. The scull was exposed to view, bearing the impress of a tremendous blow, which had undoubtedly caused death. Portions of the clothes were there.

The old man was cross examined, and told more.

That dress he well remembered, and the trinkets also. There was no possibility of doubt about them. He produced an old newspaper in which there was a minute description of her dress, and it corresponded perfectly with the remains before the court.

Upon being asked whether his daughter had any lovers, he said that he did not know. But in an old book of hers he had seen the name of "Blount Aymar," written by her, as was evident from the handwriting. There was nothing else to show any acquaintance even with any young man. If she had any lover, their meetings must have been in secret. Secresy would only have been necessary where her lover was of greatly superior station in society.

The old man's testimony was not shaken in a single particular. The hat was exposed to a severe test from different witnesses, who testified that the writing was that of Blount Aymar.

Judah Murdock was the next witness. He was calm and collected, and proceeded to give his testimony.

Some time ago chance threw some papers in his hand. He did not know who owned them. He found them in an old closet of his father's house.

One was a secret cypher.

Out of mere curiosity and a desire to exercise his skill, he proceeded to decipher the writing. This, after considerable trouble, he was able to do. It was intricate and difficult, but he was successful at last.

The purport of this was so strange, so serious, that he was thoroughly aroused. He swore that he had no personal motive whatever, but only a desire to see justice done. He had heard of the case of Emily Ford, and thought that Providence had thrown this in his way, so that the mystery might be revealed.

He at once collected the other papers which had been lying with this, and to his surprise found that they were letters bearing upon this case. From this he saw that there was only one course for him to do, and that was to bring the whole matter before the courts of law.

But first he wished to test the accuracy of these papers. He thought the best way to do this would be to make a secret examination of the well alluded to. If this case should be divulged before examination of the well, the parties implicated might anticipate the authorities.

With this intent he visited John Ford. The old man's sorrows enlisted all his sympathies, and made him feel that he was not only an instrument of justice, but a champion of the poor and the oppressed. This would fully account for all the zeal which he displayed.

The result was before the court. How horrified he had been he need not state. Until the actual discovery he had hoped that it would all be unfounded. Had nothing been discovered, the whole matter would have dropped, and no injury would have been done. But as it was, he had been compelled to make this known, even though the prisoner was one of his own best friends.

The cypher was then produced, and the key to it explained. The meaning was read to the Court:

"In memoriam Emily Ford. I loved her—I betrayed her—I murdered her. Her mangled body lies at the bottom of an old well on the homestead. All nature seems to proclaim my guilt, and cry out, Aymar, Aymar. Life is one long agony, and I would die, but death is worse. Oh, my loved, lost! lost Emily!"

The effect of this upon Blount was frightful. Every trace of color left his face. He seemed transfixed with horror and surprise. The judge also was astonished, not only at the cypher, but at its effect on Blount. The spectators looked upon the prisoner, and felt convinced that he was guilty. As for Cyril, all hope deserted him.

The letters were then read. They were full of all the usual protestations of affection. It was evident that the poor girl had been betrayed. She urged marriage; she spoke of becoming Mrs. Aymar. The person to whom she wrote she always called by some affectionate word, and not by any Christian name. Still every soul in that assemblage felt that it was Blount.

The horror of his countenance had now passed away, and was succeeded by a profound sadness. He listened eagerly, drinking in every word. His rapt attention was almost painful. Cyril, in an agony of dread, was afraid to look at his father. The crowd around expressed their feelings at times in brief ejaculations which smote upon his heart like sword thrusts. Judah Murdock was calm and impassible, like an avenging fate, and the judge never took his eyes off Blount's face.

It was a terrible scene—the despairing letters, the mortal remains, the agitation of the prisoner, and the deep excitement of the spell-bound crowd.

Questions were put to Judah Murdock, which he answered clearly and unhesitatingly. His whole manner was that of a man who had a mournful duty to perform, and was prepared to carry it through.

He could not account for the presence of those papers in the house. His father knew nothing at all about them, and had never seen them until he had shown them. His father was born in another country, and had come to this country about fifteen years previously. These papers must have been left in the house by a previous occupant.

All this evidence was terrible. John Ford swore to his daughter's handwriting. It was impossible to resist the impression that the prisoner was guilty.

At this point, however, the counsel for the prisoner arose.

He stated that there was one very important person whom he wished to bring forward as a witness. He requested a postponement of the case until this witness should come.

"Who is he?"

"John Murdock, of Danville," said the counsel.

Blount started as though he had been shot. Judah Murdock stared around him with a horrified expression. Cyril looked up, with strange thoughts and suspicions bursting in upon his mind.

"John Murdock!"

All the past and present seemed to become illumined before him. The mighty secret trembled on the brink of its development.

The Court was adjourned.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.

THE FEMALE POISONER.

FROM THE GERMAN OF PROFESSOR ALF. WALCHNER.

Dost thou not hear the melancholy tolling,
  See'st thou the masses rushing to and fro;
And that strange wagon does its dismal rolling,
  Speak to the sinner! of a place of woe.
Ha! I behold thee now, thou unrelenting
  Daughter of hell, murderer of men below,
Go in the lap of evil, unrepenting,
  Unto the fearful place of judgment go!

Up then, my brothers; forward in your places;
  Up, for the sake of heaven, and see the worst!
See how the crowd fill all the empty places,
  How from the houses the wild masses burst!
Now, dread and heartless woman, be thou ready
  To hear the sentence, awful and sublime;
When the stern Judge, in accents firm and steady,
  Shall speak thy fit reward for deeds of crime.

Farewell to all which once your soul delighted,
  The lovely valleys and the pleasant meads,
Farewell, companion of the sun, who lighted
  With her pale lamp full oft your evil deeds!
Farewell to all the well-remembered places
  That were thy paradise in childhood's time,
Farewell to girlish smiles and girlish faces
  That blest thee ere thy awful days of crime!

O, when a little child, when young and tender,
  Upon thy mother's bosom thou wert nursed,
Did'st thou each thought to infamy surrender,
  Was virtue dead within thee from the first?
Thou wert thy parents' proudest hope and treasure,
  And drest in chaste and lovely garments then,
Engaged in childish talk and childish pleasure,
  Did'st thou appear an angel among men.

Ah! what strange power to evil deeds compelled thee,
  What strong delusion glowed before thy sight;
What fearful spell in its enchantment held thee,
  So thou could'st look on crime without affright?
O, Mary, Mary, now the hour is dying,
  When on thy neck shall fall the blow most just,
Thy head of evil and thy mouth of lying
  Shall fall before the people in the dust!

Mourn for her fate all you who still have cherished
  A feeling of humanity within.
Mourn, if your nobler feelings have not perished
  Amid the world's temptation and its sin!
Lightly, as bubbles in the air, have vanished
  All your delights in everlasting gloom;
And ghostlike forms, from dark abysses banished,
  Will haunt you, like pale corpses, from the tomb.

Ah! fearful woman! could not man, tormented,
  Nor even the look with which pure childhood pleads,
Nor the dread features which the corpse presented,
  Have power to hold thee from thy murderous deeds!
Not even the infant, with its tender crying,
  When in its veins was felt the poison fires;
Not in the throat the rattle of the dying,
  Could turn thee from thy horrible desires.

Surely thy deeds were prompted by the Devil,
  For while thy father looked upon thy face,
Thou didst present to him the draught of evil,
  Monster! and stand untrembling in thy place.
As one who was most tender, and most loving,
  Thou gav'st him thy deceitful mouth to kiss;
And conscience slept within thy soul unmoving,
  Thou fiend! allied to all of wickedness!

Ah! Death and Hell were in thy look forever,
  And Death and Hell were ever in thy heart!
And of the many who embraced thee, never
  Has one escaped thy strange and deadly art.
Thy gentle sister, and thy patient mother,
  Even the blood of these thy hand has spilt;
And thou didst poison, serpentlike, thy brother.
  Only God's mercy can forgive thy guilt!

O, Mary, Mary, of thy sins repent thee,
  As if thou wert already in that pain
Which at the day of judgment shall torment thee
  While all thy cries for mercy are in vain.
Then voices, like the voices of the dying,
  Shall torture thee with agonizing pain,
And like a tiger, after warm blood crying,
  Shall come to thee the wailings of the slain.

Ah! see how fearfully it can mislead us,
  When in our heart lies coiled the serpent, sin;
Upon its fearful poison it may feed us,
  Till no repentance can be felt within.
Then forward, now, unto thy place of dying;
  How the cart rattles as it moves along;
No more shalt thou upon that bed be lying,
  Where thou for deeds of evil didst grow strong.

O, Mary, Mary, but one little hour,
  And from thy trunk will fall that head of crime,
And thou of life, and all its fearful power,
  Shalt be deprived, in one short moment's time.
Ah! see her onward to the scaffold pressing,
  While the robed priest stands by her in his place,
And as his lips bestow their words of blessing,
  How ghastly is the whiteness of her face!

Can this be sign of a repentance holy,
  Is it remorse within thy soul that speaks?
Where is the sorrow that should bow thee lowly,
  Where are the tears that should bedew thy cheeks?
No, fearful woman, thou dost feel no terror,
  For if, when thy first guilty deed was done,
Thou didst not shrink from the dark path of error,
  There is no hope for thee beneath the sun!

Woman! in God's name, now, no more delaying!
  Headsman! throw o'er her face the cloth of sin!
They who come here come cursing, and not praying,
  Now thy most fearful curses will begin.
Haste, man, before thy courage be diminished,
  Thou hast a fearful duty to fulfill;
'Tis but a blow, and human life is finished,
  O, do not torture, but strike sure, and kill!

ST. REGIS HALL.

A TALE OF TRYON COUNTY IN 1777.

BY P. HAMILTON MYERS,

AUTHOR OF "PAUL MORTON," "THE MARLOW ESTATE," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXIX.

The presentiment which had weighed so heavily on the mind of Major Barton was painfully fulfilled.

Even while he watched the vigorous efforts of the gallant little band who had so freely risked their lives for the general safety, a charging shout arose from the foe, a volley was fired from the western side of the pile, followed by a rush of dark forms between it and the house, to intercept the flight of any who might attempt to regain the window.

Who fell and who was captured it was impossible to say; Rubel alone regained the cellar, (with a shattered arm,) and it was no light aggravation to those who, from within, witnessed the dreadful onslaught, that they dared not fire upon the ferocious enemy while their own friends were mingled with them.

Dismay seized on the hearts of the besieged party, and grief unspeakable for their fallen comrades, but there was no time to mourn over a fate which might so soon be an envied one to the more wretched survivors.

Rubel reported but little fire remaining when they were obliged to abandon their work, but said that, of course, it would soon acquire new headway, if unopposed, and he recommended an instant return to their plan of a *sortie* and a charge upon the enemy as the only means of safety.

"You can disperse the pile," he said, "and perhaps inflict such punishment on the cowardly gang as to get rid of them altogether, especially if we follow it up by bringing the swivel into use in the rear. It can be brought down at once by the servants, aided by some of the stronger women, if necessary."

"Even Pike and Coots can do something at that," said one, "if they are quite sure it isn't loaded."

"And this very window may be a good place to plant it," added Major Barton; "one discharge from here will probably frighten them quite away from this side of the house. It is well thought of, Doctor, but surely you are in need of instant help yourself."

"Not much. It is my left arm which is hit, and I will instruct one of the women how to bind it up, so as to stop the bleeding, which is all it requires at present. Never mind me."

They were about to leave the cellar, and some prepared to close the window by restoring the planks which had been removed from it, but Major Barton forbade them.

"Some of our men may possibly have escaped death," he said, "and may make their way back to the opening. They must not find themselves barred out. Two men can guard it against a hundred."

Two were accordingly left on this duty, while the remainder of the party returned above stairs, yet not immediately to set out on the perilous enterprise which had been planned.

Major Barton resolved to leave no effort untried which might obviate the terrible necessity of venturing out of his stronghold against such fearful odds, and there was hope yet that the fire might be kept down, for a while at least, by a discharge of water from the upper windows, without serious exposure of those engaged in the work. This experiment was speedily tried, and gave some promise of success.

Some brought water, some knelt beneath or beside the windows to throw it out, dodging hastily back to avoid the bullets, while others fired at random into the yard to alarm and keep back the foe.

But the sheltered position of the savages behind the shed enabled them to keep up a dangerous fire through the narrow opening they had made, without serious exposure to themselves, and it soon became doubtful whether the flames could be extinguished in this way without even greater loss of life than might attend the bolder attack reserved for a *dernier* resort.

New and startling events were meanwhile occurring below stairs. Scarcely had Mr. Barton withdrawn his force from the cellar, when his wise foresight in regard to the lost men, was signally evinced by the sudden return of Hans the Oneida, who came flying through the window, as if he had been projected from a catapult.

He reported his companions killed beyond a doubt, having seen their bodies dragged from the bush while he was concealed in the thickest part of it, and having seized the moment to effect his escape when the Mohawks were squabbling over and grabbing the spoils, in the shape of clothing and small arms.

The fire, he said, was still burning, and would of course be immediately started anew in half a dozen places; but he announced his entire readiness to go again with the sallying party to put it out.

Yet as the three men, having secured the window, were about to rejoin their comrades, an idea occurred to the Oneida, upon which he at once proceeded to act, with the readily accorded aid of his companions, who, in common with all the besieged party, entertained the highest opinion of the friendly Indian's valor and ingenuity.

"Hans will be Big Bison," he said. "Mohawks no shoot him! Ha!"

He quickly divested the dead man of his principal garments and arrayed himself in them, having first laid aside the corresponding portions of his own dress. A tunic and kilt of blue cloth, buckskin leggins, and mocassins, embroidered with many colored beads—a sash also richly beaded, and a head-dress composed of a tuft of eagle's feathers, bound with some tinsel cincture, composed the distinctive features of the slain man's apparel. But even when clad in these, and aided by a tolerable resemblance in size and shape to the Mohawk brave, Hans well knew that his disguise was incomplete without some imitation of the paint which imparted both grotesqueness and ferocity to the features of the Big Bison; and that under any circumstances which required the exposure of his face even by a faint light, his Indian enemies would instantly detect the deception.

Not knowing to what use he might want to put his disguise, he resolved to make it as perfect as possible, and remembering that on some of his frequent visits at the Hall he had seen Miss Barton engaged in drawing and painting, he believed that she could furnish him with the means of making at least a partial imitation of his enemy's physiognomy.

He hastily sought her, and found in her a ready and skillful auxiliary. She procured her art implements, including the many-hued paints which had so often excited his admiration, and together with Miss Hale, and Coots, who was officiously ready for any service which did not involve danger, she accompanied him back to the side of the ghastly object, whose fantastic features were to form the model of her work.

Never before had such a task devolved upon such gentle hands, but Elizabeth nerved herself to her loathsome work, which was partly relieved of its painful character by the genial good nature and even mirthfulness of her forest friend.

Hans's broad face and ample chest were free from paint, yet he carefully washed and dried his clear olive skin before submitting it to the fair artist's brush, which was quickly in motion upon it, and that with no delicacy of touch.

If it was not an easy matter to imitate the glaring hues and rude symbols which disfigured the Mohawk's person, it was only because the work was too coarse for a hand accustomed to the elegant labors of the easel.

It required some exertion, too, on the part of Elizabeth, to look at the dreadful model for her work, which had been propped up in a sitting posture by the wall, while Luke and Mr. Coots held lights beside it, and Fanny Hale, also holding a lamp, stood near Miss Barton and her living canvas.

The face of the Oneida, from forehead to chin, was first made of an uniform red, almost a fiery scarlet indeed, after which a very broad and very black circle was drawn around each eye, covering the eyebrows, and extending to about an equal distance beneath the lower lid. The mouth was surrounded by a similar ring and crooked black lines, designed to represent horns, were painted upon the temples.

This part of Elizabeth's task was easy of accomplishment, and her success in it was pronounced perfect, greatly to the delight of Hans, who still expressed some fears that she might not be competent to the more artistic labors which remained, for a rampant bison was to be delineated on the Indian's chest, and several devices on the arms, after a groundwork of red had also been applied to those parts of his body.

It did require care to copy the uncouth pictures with sufficient correctness to make them as bungling and as unlike nature as the originals, yet even in this the young lady succeeded so well that when a mirror was brought to the Oneida, in order that he might examine and criticise the work, he had no improvements to suggest.

He looked at himself a few seconds in speechless admiration, and then seizing his rifle and dropping from his erect attitude into the more stooping posture of the Mohawk, he walked backwards and forwards a few times, practising the gait of his late enemy, and even his peculiar mode of carrying his gun, with a ready fidelity, which attested his close habits of observation and his strong imitative powers.

A smile of perfect satisfaction lighted up his now horrid features, as he said:

"The Big Bison is alive again. He will go back to his friends."

"Better not let Mass Fred. see you like dat, Hans," said Luke. "He shoot you ober agin, jest as sure as you go up dem stairs. Mind I tell you."

"Ugh! So will Joab and the medicine man. All shoot. Go tell 'em Hans is coming."

"We will all go ahead and herald you," said Elizabeth, "for the danger would certainly be very great if you should appear above stairs unannounced. Every gun would be pointed at you at once."

"Good girl! Very much good! Knows everything! Go!"

The Oneida had laid his huge hand familiarly upon the head of Elizabeth, with an air of dignity and a look of affection not a little impressive, despite the wild and ferocious aspect which had been artificially imparted to his features.

The young lady, who well knew his worth, did not shrink from the contact; but, on the contrary, she returned his ill-expressed compliment and kindly gaze with a smile and a pleased and grateful look.

Mr. Coots, however, who looked upon all Indians as monsters, and on Hans as only a tamed specimen of the species, thought to recommend himself to Miss Barton by checking such an approach to familiarity on the part of the tractable Oneida.

"I say! better not do that," he said; "hands off you know. Young ladies are always afraid of Indians. Do you understand?"

"Yes, Hans unnerstans!" said the affronted Oneida, gruffly, and with a sudden fearful change of countenance, while a wrathful glance shot from his eyes, which seemed to penetrate the quailing dandy. "He unnerstans! He knows chatter man! Talk! Talk! No shootem gun! Hide 'mong women! Hans knows, but can't speak 'um—ugh!"

His rage had increased his difficulty of giving expression to his ideas in the English language, but he sputtered forth his few contemptuous epithets with great volubility, until Elizabeth interfered and pacified him by soothing words, and by despatching the terrified fop ahead, to announce the transformation of the republican Oneida into a royal Mohawk.

The safety of Hans was most welcome intelligence to all, and his return was considered most opportune at a moment when the twice deferred *sortie* was at last fully resolved upon, and was on the point of being carried into effect.

The disguise, although much admired for its ingenuity, was regarded only as a matter conducive to the Indian's personal safety, and excited no considerable interest in a moment of such grave importance to all.

CHAPTER XXX.

Butler had forborne an attempt to take the Hall by an open and bold assault, which the extent of his force might well have justified, from a desire to save the lives of his men, and perhaps still more out of deference to his Indian allies, who could, with difficulty, be induced to depart from their accustomed manner of fighting.

He believed that the present mode of attack would compel a speedy and unconditional surrender, or if not so, that the defenders of the house could be nearly all shot down or captured while seeking to escape from the burning building, and while fully exposed to view by its light.

That they would venture out, few as he believed them to be, and themselves become the assailants, he did not imagine; and it was doubtless fortunate for the brave band, who had devoted themselves to this enterprise, that their rash and rapid movements were not anticipated.

Major Barton well knew how much depended on celerity and promptness of action, and he took pains to impress this idea upon his companions, whom he had determined to lead in person.

"What we do we must do with a rush," he said to them, "and every man must understand his exact duty before starting. There will be little time to give orders, and small chance to hear them, when once we are outside. Dr. Rubel can tell you that some of the most important operations in surgery are usually performed in a very few seconds. So it is sometimes in war, and in both cases tardiness is often but another name for bungling."

"Dr. Rubel wishes he was going with you, instead of staying here to guard the door," replied the surgeon, whose wounded arm was now in a sling, but who was still armed with pistols—a knife and a hatchet, which projected from various parts of his clothing, and together with his blood-stained coat-sleeve gave him a decidedly bellicose appearance.

The garrison had been reduced to twenty-one, of whom a few must necessarily be left to defend the passage by which the sallying party were to go out, while of the latter nearly half were to give their attention in the first place exclusively to scattering the burning pile, leaving the fighting force small indeed.

Yet all bore weapons of some kind, useful in a hand to hand encounter, and even some of the miscellaneous implements which were carried to disperse the brush might be made as effective in a close engagement as the guns for which they had been substituted.

Perilous as was the enterprise on which these men were bound, there were some who manifested an impatience of the few delays which impeded their departure; and when Lieutenant Huntington, who had insisted on accompanying the party, suddenly called the Oneida aside and talked earnestly to him apart, not a few angry glances were cast at the colloquists, and some of the men begged to be led on, before it was too late.

Yet still the earnest conversation went on in voice and pantomime, and Major Barton forbore to interfere only because he had the greatest confidence in the men who thus interrupted the general movement.

"You are sure that you understand?" Huntington was heard to say, grasping the Indian's swarthy hand.

"Hans unnerstans," was the brief answer.

But what was the general surprise, when the Indian came forward, and instead of taking the place he had relinquished among the men, announced his determination not to go with them.

"How is this?" asked Barton, alarmed lest his example should produce further defection. "Does my old friend desert us?"

"The Indian is afraid," said another voice, and several faces blanched at the contemplation of a danger which even the Oneida refused to encounter.

"Hans is not afraid," was the calm reply, "but he will not go; he will keep door."

Huntington in the meantime exchanged a few words with Major Barton, who smiled, and said, looking at the men who were to have remained with Rubel at the entrance:

"It is all right. Who will change places with the Oneida?"

Two of the guard promptly offered themselves, and one being accepted, the door at a signal was thrown open, and the party passed rapidly out, yet with but little noise.

Their exodus did not appear to be immediately discovered, and they turned the angle of the house to confront the now crackling mass of boughs, which was sufficiently lighted to reveal everything in its immediate vicinity. The pile was at last almost thoroughly ablaze, for although much of it had been deluged by the water which for many minutes had been persistently poured upon it, yet the flame had everywhere overcome and licked up the dripping element, and was now pervading nearly the whole glowing structure. It had not indeed attained its culmination; the apex of the pyramid was yet unkindled; but already the end clapboards of the house were blackened and smoking, and here and there a tongue of fire had made a lodgment on the edges of the overlapping boards, and on the salient points presented by the sills and coping of the windows.

Fortunately, in transferring the moveables from the outhouses to the cellar, which had been leisurely done long before the arrival of the enemy, the negroes had not overlooked the various tools and implements of husbandry, and trivial as this precaution seemed then, it proved of more importance than could have been anticipated, enabling the men who had to storm the fiery citadel to arm themselves with the very weapons most adapted to their purpose.

Long handled pitchforks and iron rakes were their weapons, and with these they rushed eagerly at the dangerous heap, tossing its lighted branches in every direction excepting houseward, and quickly diminishing its volume. The enemy were nowhere visible, but with the first onset upon the brush heap, their defiant war-whoop rose loud and long, and a volley of bullets was fired from the direction of the shed. But one man was touched, and he was not disabled, and seeing no foe to attack, Major Barton ordered all hands to the pile, himself leading the way, and using his gun-barrel to toss the burning brands, taking care to cover with one hand the lock and priming pan, and enjoining a similar precaution on his followers.

A second harmless discharge of bullets rained amongst them, yet with such vigor and desperation did the men work amidst the stifling flame and smoke, some retreating at times, momentarily, to breathe, and rushing again to the attack, that in less than two minutes they had removed and scattered all that portion of the ignited mass which had been sufficiently near the house to endanger its safety.

But the intelligence of this gallant exploit had by this time reached the Tories who were in front of the Hall, and at the very instant that Major Barton began to consider his work accomplished in safety, he was apprised by a shout from his friends in the house that Butler, with a considerable force, was advancing to cut off his retreat.

He immediately recalled his company from their now completed task, and seeing that it was too late to regain the entrance without an encounter with the furious foe, he hastily formed his men for an attack, while the Tory leader, checking the advance of his men near the kitchen door, demanded a surrender.

"'Taint no use to hold out," he said; "we've got you between two fires, now. Lay down your arms, and I'll save your lives as far as I can. Come on, Bison, with your men, but don't fire. They've surrendered, I believe."

It was evident that Butler's forbearance from firing was owing to the fear of shooting his allies in the rear of the yard, and that the guns of the latter were silent for a similar reason.

Yet the Indians were seen and heard rushing forward in obedience to a command which implied that they might do so with safety, and Barton gave the word to fire, and simultaneously with the report of the guns, he shouted, as he rushed forward with unsheathed sword:

"Charge, now, my boys, with bayonets, pitchforks, hatchets, anything! Give it to the cowardly dogs! Down with them! That's a good stroke, friend Betts!"

They were at once in the midst of the *melée*, and the stout blacksmith, who was close at Barton's side, had among his side arms a small sledgehammer, which he was wielding with terrific effect.

"I don't know much about the baggonet," he said, dropping his rifle; "it never seems to go to the right spot, but this ere tool—there, take that, you fool!" he added, dashing a painted Tory to the ground; "and *you* want some blacksmith's work done, too!" He brained another as he spoke, and rushed forward, gaining fury with each success, and laughing with maniac-like merriment as the bodies of his enemies dropped around him.

The swords of Major Barton and Huntington were in the meantime doing a more silent but scarcely less efficacious work, while others of the men fought with various weapons, and one even transfixed an opponent with a heavily-pronged pitchfork, yet glowing with the red heat which it had acquired in the burning pile.

The Tories, although outnumbering the struggling little band full five to one, were staggered by the violence of the attack, and would quickly have fallen back but for the momentary expectation that the Indians in the rear, who were in still larger force, would instantly come up.

But the Mohawks were forbidden to fire, and having no relish for a hand to hand engagement with such desperate men, (whose numbers they did not know,) the most of them contented themselves with issuing a succession of war-whoops and looking on. They evidently preferred to let the pale-faces fight it out among themselves, knowing that they would come in for a share of the spoils, all the same.

Butler shouted to them in vain, but gathering fresh courage as he saw one of the patriots fall, and several others retreat before a charge of some of the bolder Tories, he again cheered his men on, though never taking the advance himself, nor seeming to seek an opponent.

"We've got 'em now, boys!" he said; "give it to 'em! There's another down! There aint more'n ten left. We'll finish 'em in a few minutes!"

"You will, will you?" shouted Lieutenant Huntington. "Here comes our reserve; twenty-five good men from the house! Now, then, come on!"

In truth, Dr. Rubel could no longer be a silent witness of the fray, although many of the women clustered around him and his few companions, and begged them not to go forth to leave them entirely defenceless.

He had rushed out, followed by three of the men, but their loud shouts, and the still louder yells issued by the Oneida, who for some inexplicable reason still remained inside, made their numbers really seem nearly as large as the vaunt of Huntington proclaimed it.

A momentary panic was the result. The Tories fell rapidly back, and Major Barton took advantage of it to regain the house with the survivors of his command, and with his dead and wounded.

CHAPTER XXXI.

The temporary triumph had been dearly purchased by the lives of three more of the gallant defenders of the Hall, and it seemed wonderful that in such an encounter the loss was not much more severe. The wounded were far more numerous, few having escaped some injury, although only one of the survivors was entirely disabled.

The result, in its best aspect, was melancholy enough for the besieged party, yet the first feeling of the survivors was one of elation at the victory they had achieved over a greatly superior force. The immediate object of their expedition had been effected, the foe had been driven back, and his loss had evidently been far greater than their own.

The important question remained whether or not the rebuff would so far discourage him as to induce an abandonment of the attack, and there were not a few who were hopeful enough to anticipate such a result.

Some loud and angry talking was heard on the outside, but it soon ceased, and was followed by the profoundest silence, and those who watched from the windows reported that there was no attempt to gather the dispersed brushwood, much of which was still burning, and shedding a glimmering light around the yard. The little jets of flame which had caught in several spots on the end of the house had not gained sufficient volume to prove self-sustaining when the heat which fostered them was removed, and they scarcely needed the water which was now showered upon them to make sure of their extinction.

The interval of suspense which ensued was variously occupied by those who were not required to watch and listen for the further movements of the foe.

Some assisted the wounded, some condoled with the relatives of the slain, and others discussed the past events—recounted the feats of individual bravery they had witnessed, and laid their plans for further defence.

The swarthy blacksmith, greatly to his surprise, found himself a hero in the estimation of his friends, who had seen his brawny arm and ponderous hammer turn back the tide of battle on every side, while his admirable coolness had been an equal subject of laudation.

"You shall never put shoe on horse of mine again, Tom," said Major Barton, shaking his head in mock displeasure at the astonished mechanic—"never!"

"Why, Major," replied the man, "what have I done to anger you? I did the best I knew how, and you shouldn't ought to expect me to use the baggonet, if that's the trouble, seein'——"

Barton grasped the blackened hand which was held out deprecatingly towards him, and shaking it cordially, said:

"You don't understand me, man! You have outdone us all, and but for you and Rubel, who frightened the scoundrels off with his 'reserve,' I do believe we never should have seen the inside of St. Regis again."

"Give Huntington credit for the panic," said Rubel, "him and Hans, whose screech rings in my ears yet."

"But for you, Betts," continued Barton, for the blacksmith's puzzled look reminded him that he had not explained his playful threat, "what I have to say is this: You have often told me that you were tired of your trade, and longed for nothing so much as to give it up and to own a small farm. If we ever both get out of this bad scrape, you shall have your wish. There's the Duck Creek farm, eighty acres of flats and woodland, will just suit you, and it shall be yours to-morrow."

"Why, Major, I never can pay for *that*. I haven't got a hundred dollars in the world."

"It *is* paid for, I tell you—if not in good broad pieces, at least in good stout blows on the heads of those villainous brigands. I acknowledge the receipt of the 'consideration' in full."

"I am very glad that you have not had to take the 'consideration' in person, Major," said Rubel, smiling; "and if that is the kind of coin that friend Betts pays his creditors in, I hope he will never be a debtor of mine."

The blacksmith found it difficult to express his thanks for the promised gift, which seemed to him quite like a fortune. He did not think he had done more than others, he said, but since he was so richly paid, he would try to do something before the night was past towards squaring accounts and thoroughly easing his conscience.

"Let the tories keep out of my reach now," he said, "since I've learned how much their heads are worth. I don't think I've done my best yet."

Mr. Pike, who thought he had fully vindicated his reputation for courage by venturing to act as one of the guard at the door, but who had not followed Rubel and the others in their daring charge, manifested some uneasiness at the honors heaped upon his neighbor. He had been writhing, too, under the taunts which Betts had bestowed upon him for not joining the main party, and he was not prudent enough to keep silence.

"*I* don't believe Tom did any great things," he said, "'cept with his tongue. He shouted and made a great noise, of course, but what can a man do with such a clumsy weapon as that?"

"I'll show you, you great calf!" said Betts, grasping his hammer, which lay beside him, and swinging it high above his head, with his flashing eye fixed on his calumniator, who sprang back so suddenly from the expected blow as to upset the man nearest to him, and tumble headlong over him.

Several caught hold of the seemingly irate mechanic to stay his hand, but Tom, lowering his weapon, and smiling good-naturedly, said:

"I didn't mean to harm him. I only wanted to show you what the critter was made of. *I* know him."

"Never mind," replied Levi, rising slowly and returning to his place; "it's mighty easy to talk and bluster; of course I didn't want that big hammer throwed at me; but it won't do to quarrel among ourselves now, when we are in so much danger, otherways I'd show him!"

"Very well. I'll give you a chance to show what you can do any time."

"What I mean to say is, that if it hadn't been for my rheumatiz, which is on mighty strong to-day, I wouldn't a' sot here at the door, and I'd a' killed, or leastways wounded, as many tories and Injins to-night as anybody else, I don't care who he is, nor how much he brags, I don't. I never brag myself, but you all know very well how my father fit the Injins and French, and how my brother was killed by them."

"Which *you* never will be, I'll be bound," said Tom, "unless their legs are the longest, or 'less you get caught here to-night; but I mean to protect you and the rest of the women, if I can."

A general laugh followed the blacksmith's sally, and Levi was about to reply that he did not want any of his protection, when the thought occurred to him that circumstances might occur which would make him regret such a disclaimer, and he remained silent, pocketing the insult as he had often done before. Indeed he might be said to have a pocketful of this poor currency.

The controversy was checked at this point by Major Barton, who made an excuse for separating the disputants by assigning the blacksmith to some duty in another room.

CHAPTER XXXII.

The important occurrences of this most eventful night were so many, that our narrative must touch but lightly on minor incidents, lest it should grow to a wearisome length.

That Lieutenant Huntington occasionally found time and opportunity in the intervals of his perilous duties to gain a brief interview with the beautiful girl who had so strangely fascinated him, need scarcely be told.

He saw her indeed only amidst her friends, and always engaged in some duty growing out of the general emergency; and the hour was by no means one that admitted of the advances of a suitor, even if the young man could so suddenly have resolved upon assuming that character.

Yet they who are best acquainted with young hearts know well that there is no situation too perilous or too grave for that mutual recognition of congeniality which is ever the precursor of genuine love.

Unconscious that he was falling under the domination of the tender passion, and unskilled in the signs by which it is indicated, the young lieutenant, without suspicion of his safety, found himself almost painfully interested in wondering whether the beautiful Elizabeth had already found an object for her affections among the many admirers whom he was sure she must have, or whether she was still free to bestow her heart on him who could win that priceless treasure.

Her extreme youthfulness seemed to render the latter hypothesis plausible, but her manifest charms and her high social position made him fear that she could not be "disengaged."

Conjectures and suspicions next arose in his mind as to who was the fortunate man who had achieved so great a conquest, or the designing one who aspired to do so.

He thought of both Doctor Rubel and young Halmer, but there was so little in the appearance of either, engrossed as they were with the gravest cares, which indicated the existence of such a sentiment in their breasts, that he dismissed the idea from his mind almost as soon as it was conceived.

Coots next became an object of his suspicion, for Solomon was a man of fine personal appearance, and in costume he was fully up to the engraved models which merchant tailors display in their windows. Besides, as Huntington had learned, the pretty fop was not a resident of the community, but he was a visitor from the eastern part of the State, nearer to the fountain head of fashion and gentility, as his dress and deportment indicated.

If he were not a suitor for the hand of Elizabeth, what could he possibly be here for? The case was plain to poor Huntington, who saw at once a fatal obstacle to his new hopes in this probable scion of some wealthy family, who had condescended, he supposed, to penetrate the interior of a thinly settled country to so great a distance for the purpose of visiting the object of his affections. Unfortunately for the lieutenant's peace of mind, he was quite ignorant of the reputation which Mr. Coots' pusillanimity had earned for him, and although he was aware that the latter was taking no active part in the defence of the Hall, he supposed there must be some reason for his conduct which justified him in the eyes of the family whose alliance he sought.

Huntington, of course, had not heard the reproof administered to the dandy by Major Barton, this incident having occurred before the invalid lieutenant had descended to the parlor, and there was nothing to prevent or modify the unpleasant suspicion with which he had begun to regard him.

Nor indeed was it wholly grounless, for although Solomon's first choice had been the pretty Miss Hale, he had reason to fear that she had set her affections on Frederick Barton, (who, in his turn, perhaps loved somebody else, for so does Cupid often play at cross purposes with the poor human heart,) and he had quite gravely considered the subject of honoring Elizabeth with his addresses, in the event of Fanny's failure to appreciate his worth. As in most other cases, Mr. Coots's conceit was in inverse proportion to his merit, and he really entertained scarcely a doubt that either of these country belles would gladly accept him, as soon as his wishes were distinctly made known, provided only they were not positively engaged already. He was even good-natured enough to feel sorry for Miss Barton in view of the regret with which he was sure she must witness his preference for her friend, but if circumstances should, after all, devolve the rich prize of his heart and hand upon her, Fanny being otherwise disposed of to her liking, he was certain the satisfaction would be very general and very complete.

With these views Solomon had made himself as agreeable as possible to both the young ladies, and even during this tragical night he had kept near them, officiously assisting at such labors as fell to their lot, while evading the graver responsibilities of his position. He thought he had done his share of martial duty, believing that his character as a visitor entitled him to exemption from great personal hazard, and he did not doubt that Major Barton would justify his course if they should pass safely through the perils which threatened them.

He believed indeed that if the Major once understood his matrimonial views, he would decidedly prefer that he should be very careful of himself and not put his life in unnecessary jeopardy. This may seem like the character of a madman, but Solomon's insanity was only that of excessive vanity and conceit, and these are qualities which in the eighteenth century entered largely into the composition of the human character.

Huntington had observed the familiar terms on which the chattering beau appeared to be with both the young ladies, and in a brief accidental interview which he had with Coots, the latter, although exciting his profound contempt, increased his jealousy—a mental malady hitherto unknown to the young soldier, and unrecognized as such by him even while he felt its keenest pangs.

"This has been a dreadful night, Mr. Huntington," said Solomon to the young officer. "Do you think those horrid wretches are gone at last?"

"I fear they have not. They are probably only concocting some new and more diabolical scheme of attack, for they have too much to avenge to quit us now."

"Do you think so? I—I really hope not. Mr. Pike says that—that Butler is but a cowardly fellow, after all, and that our vigorous resistance has probably frightened him off."

"Butler may be a coward, as most barbarians are. But he will be disgraced if he has to report so heavy a loss to Colonel Johnson without any corresponding advantage, and unfortunately the prospect of plunder in a house like this, is a great incentive both to him and his men."

"Do you think so? Well, really, then we might better throw the things out of the window to them, if they would agree to go off satisfied with that. And I—I'll give 'em a thousand dollars myself, if they would take a draft on my father in Schenectady for the amount, or would call on me after I return home. I would indeed."

Huntington smiled as he replied:

"If your credit is good with them, it will be time enough to use it to ransom yourself and friends after you have become prisoners. At present I do not think any one is disposed to ask terms of the villains, or that any compact would bind them if it should be made. We must fight it out."

"It's really dreadful! But suppose they take us, what then?"

"I think Butler himself would be disposed to make some prisoners for the purpose of exchange, but I do not believe he can restrain the Indians when their 'blood is up,' or that he would take much pains to do so, and our chance would really be very poor. I tremble chiefly for these poor women and children!"

"Dear! dear! It is an awful, awful state of things. I didn't really think it so bad," replied Solomon, turning very white, and visibly trembling. He had been talking from time to time with Mr. Pike, who, like himself, had been much at leisure, and the two had kept up each other's courage by predicting the best, and now the lieutenant's more sensible views greatly alarmed him.

"There's those poor dear girls, Elizabeth and Fanny!" he resumed. "To think that they should fall into the hands of such wretches. I—I wonder if we couldn't get them off somehow. I'll tell you wh—what I've been thinking of."

"Well?"

"You know there are a lot of horses in the cellar?"

"Yes."

"And some very swift ones. There's Hunter, now, goes like a deer. I've been thinking we might have three of them saddled, (there are two side saddles down there, and lots of the other kind, for I have been down and looked at them,) and put both of the girls on horseback, ready for a dash through the outside cellar door, which could be thrown open just as they were all rushing into the house to plunder it. Don't you see?"

"Oh, yes—I see you have the plan very well digested. But you would not have them go alone, would you?"

"Oh, no! I would be willing to go with them for a guard. I'm a very good rider."

Again Huntington smiled, but being somewhat impressed with the idea suggested by Solomon, he replied:

"It is quite possible that a good many of the ladies might be saved by some such plan as you propose, if they are accustomed to riding, and would dare to make the attempt."

"Elizabeth and Fanny are both very good riders, I know," Solomon hastily replied. "I have been out with them several times; and Miss Barton can even ride Hunter at his fastest trot."

"Some of the women might certainly escape this way, perhaps nearly all of them; for there must be fifteen or sixteen horses in the cellar. I suppose the neighbors rode here on their farm horses."

"Yes, several came with spans, and then the major has five of his own."

"Is this plan of escape one of your own devising?"

"N-no, not exactly; I heard Major Barton and the doctor talking of something of the kind; but feeling greatly interested in the young ladies, I—I thought I would be willing——"

"Oh, yes, I see; your interest is especially in Miss Barton, I suppose," replied Huntington, smiling.

Solomon believed that the profession of a special regard for Elizabeth would increase his chances of becoming her escort, for her father's word, he knew, was considered by those around him quite as authoritative as if he had been duly invested with military authority over them.

He rejoined: "Well, yes, Elizabeth and I are very good friends. Perhaps something more. Hem!"

The lieutenant winced at this reply, and felt that his contempt of his companion was changing into a stronger feeling.

"The safety of the ladies," he said, "must of course be the first consideration; and as most of them can probably ride, and all would at least make the attempt on such an emergency, all the horses would be required for their use. If any should be left, it would be well, of course, to have two or three of the strongest and bravest men accompany them, not as a guard exactly, for they could be of little use as such, but rather as guides and advisers."

"Yes, exactly, of course; and now don't you see that you and I might be the ones to go, eh? Probably the ladies, or at least some of them, would prefer us; I think I may venture to say I know they would, as far as I am concerned."

"That would be a question for our seniors to decide; probably the men would be selected by Major Barton, in which case, I presume, your chance would be very good. For myself, I certainly shall not seek the post."

"Not seek it! My stars, would you stay here to be murdered, when you might dash off on a swift horse?"

"I do not say that I would not be willing to go, but others are equally entitled with me to this chance of escape, if it should be attempted, and I certainly shall not solicit it. Major Barton may choose to be one of the party himself, or to give his son or nephew the benefit of it. The bravery of either of those young men would fully justify such a course."

"Y-yes, they've been brave enough, though it isn't much to shoot an Indian through a window, as Fred. did. I could have done that, if I had had the chance, and in fact I don't know but I did, for I fired from the third story with the rest of them. Of course we couldn't go out and drag in our men."

"Ah, you have been assisting in the defence, then?" asked Huntington, in a surprised tone; "I did not know that."

"Of course I have, until I got tired out, but one don't get any credit for anything unless they keep blowing their own trumpet all the while. I've been thinking about this matter, that Fred. or Joab might be sent off with the ladies, but there's just one thing about it that may as well be understood. One of the horses down in the cellar *belongs to me*, and I don't intend that he shall carry any one but his master. 'Self-preservation is the first law of nature,' you know."

Without directly replying to his craven companion, Huntington asked him if he had traveled on horseback from his distant home, for a journey sixty miles through an unsettled country, in times like these, implied the possession of more courage than he believed Coots, "in his best estate," could have possessed.

"Oh, no," Solomon replied, "I did not bring the horse from home, I bought him here, within this hour, of one of the villagers."

"Is it possible?"

"Yes, sir—of a Mr. Boon. He was outside there with you just now, and fought very well, they say, as I suppose they all did. In fact, I was just thinking about coming out myself when you came in."

"I should have thought Mr. Boon would not have been willing to sell his horse under such circumstances."

"Well, he wasn't exactly willing, but he is a very poor man, and the money was a great temptation to him. He said if he did escape, it would quite set him up, for you see, I gave him full five times the real value of the horse, rather more, I think."

"It was like buying the man's life."

"Yes, wasn't it?"

"You are fortunate in being so well supplied with money."

"O, that's nothing; a mere flea-bite. Why, sir, I would have given twice as much if necessary. A man does not think much of money in such a case as this, you see."

"It seems that Mr. Boon did."

"Oh, Boon! Yes—he is a poor man; probably not worth a thousand dollars in the world."

"Probably not a hundred."

"I don't very well see how a man could be as poor as that, but it may be."

"But, after all, I think it doubtful whether your right to that horse will be recognized, when the time for flight comes, if it comes at all, which I begin to hope it will not."

"Not recognized? Why—what do you mean?"

"Why, it seems to me that our commander here, as Major Barton may very well claim to be, has a full right to decide all such questions. No man can well claim the exclusive use of property here which has been protected by the joint valor and labors of all. There is such a thing as military necessity, which sometimes rides over private rights in time of war."

"Well, it won't ride my horse," replied Solomon, smiling very faintly at his conceit, yet looking not a little alarmed. "I—I'll hide him till the time comes, if necessary; and I'll ask no man's permission to mount him and gallop off, when the way is open. Military necessity, indeed! A pretty story! I believe I know something about the law, and I never heard of such a thing as that yet."

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

* * *

NOTHING TO SCOLD ABOUT.

"It is as uncomfortable to feel like scolding, and have nothing to scold about, as it is to be hungry and have nothing to eat."—*A Western Editor.*

Poor fellow! Nothing to scold about! That must be an inconceivably cruel fate! Imagine the acute aggravation sustained by a mortal man ready primed for the assault, who has compelled himself to a surly graciousness, all day long, although he wanted to bite every individual who came into his office, and would cheerfully have given fifty dollars for the privilege of kicking half his clients down stairs, without rhyme or reason—imagine that man bolting into his domestic sanctum at night, and finding—nothing to scold about! Fancy him overhauling his handkerchiefs, with nervous haste, and discovering that the small fracture which had offended his eyesight that morning, has been neatly darned; observe him peering through his spectacles at the bright spoons and forks, and sniffing doubtfully at the fragrant tea; see him considering whether the toes of his slippers are pointing in the right direction, and looking out grimly for the moment when the unoffending occupant of the wooden-cradle shall wake up, and salute his ears with a "scold-able" outcry! Nothing to scold about! A nice state this country is in, truly, when a man can't even have the privilege of scolding in his own house, for lack of a subject!

Poor, dear, whiskered baby! He is too old to cork up his eyes with a pair of red knuckles, and indulge in the hearty roar which would have relieved him in the days when he used to carry marbles in his pockets, and own a kite with a tail twelve feet long! What wouldn't he give to be a school-boy for just about five minutes, and "cry it out," with the right of howling out, behind a little red handkerchief, "'Cause—I—don't—know!" when he is asked what ails him. These ebullitions were a species of moral soda-water, amazingly "settling" to the system. But those halcyon hours are past. Men don't cry—it isn't *manly*; but it is eminently manly to scold, *of* course! And that makes matters all the more annoying to the wretched individual who can't find anything to scold about. His sufferings are more sharp than ever!

Now, if he possesses a wise little wife, (as no doubt he does, for we know of a good many undeserving scamps who are blessed in that way,) she'll find out, in just two minutes from the time his creaking shoe sounds on the hall oil-cloth, what and where the ache is, and if she knows what's best for herself, she'll lose no time in knocking over the tea-pot, or bumping the baby's head, or treading on Grumbler's corns, or doing *something*—no matter what—to give him a fair chance to explode about! Let him scold! Don't attempt to check the tide of his wrath, but look as meek and frightened as you can; and depend on it, the sky will be as clear as a June sunset in ten minutes! He'll experience a delightful sense of relief, and the next stage will be repentance for having been such a brute! And if you conduct the campaign adroitly, the least he'll attempt to compromise on will be a new bonnet, or a seat at the opera! Just try it once!

Mrs. George Washington Wyllys.

* * *

Sensible Tokens of Love.—Get not your friends by love compliments, but by giving them sensible tokens of your love. It is well worth while to learn how to win the heart of a man the right way. Force is of no use to make or preserve our friends. Excite them by your civilities, and show them that you desire nothing more than their happiness; oblige with all your soul that friend who has made you a present of his own.

DETHRONED.

BY PHŒBE CARY.

The time has come, as I knew it must,
  When you and I should part;
But I ceased to love when I ceased to trust,
  And you cannot break my heart.

Nay, I know not even if I am sad,
  And it may be for the best,
Since you only take what I thought I had
  And leave to me the rest.

Not all the stars of my hope are set,
  Though one is like in eclipse;
And I know there is truth in the wide world yet,
  If it be not on your lips.

And though I have loved you, who can tell
  If you ever had been so dear;
But that my heart was prodigal
  Of its wealth, and you were near!

I brought each rich and beautiful thing
  From my love's great treasury;
And I thought in myself to make a king,
  With the robes of royalty.

But you lightly laid my honors down,
  And you taught me this to know;
Not every head can wear the crown,
  That our hands of love bestow!

So take whatever you can from me,
  And leave me as you will;
The sweet romance, and the poesy,
  Were mine, and I have them still.

And whenever my fancy has her way,
  Yea, though it were even now,
She can make a god of common clay,
  Or a man of such as thou!

* * *

THE MOTHER'S DEFENCE.

BY EMERSON BENNETT.

Among the early settlers of Kentuc..y was one Jonathan Wells, who located himself in a pleasant valley, not far from the Ohio river, where for a couple of years he remained in peaceful quiet, unmolested by the Indians. One pleasant day, in early autumn, he set off for the nearest settlement, leaving his wife and a little three-year old daughter at home, telling the former that he should probably be back by dark, and charging her, if he was not, to secure the house and open the door to no one but himself.

In the afternoon of that day, Mrs. Wells—who, though a small, delicate woman, possessed the true spirit of a border heroine—happened to be doing something a few rods from her dwelling, when, chancing to look towards the woods surrounding the clearing, she espied a couple of savages cautiously reconnoitering the place. She thought of her husband away, her helpless little child in the house, her own lonely and almost defenceless situation, and felt ready to sink with despair; but she called on God for aid, nerved herself with a firm resolve, and walked quietly back to the dwelling, with the air and manner of one who had seen nothing to occasion the slightest alarm.

No sooner was she in the house, however, out of sight of the Indians, than, catching up her little girl, she pressed her to her heart, with maternal anguish, and prayed God to preserve her harmless, even though her own life should be sacrificed.

"What for mamma say so?" inquired the little curly-hairedpet, looking up into her mother's tearful face with childish wonder.

"You must keep still, Ella, and not make the least noise, because there are wicked Indians about, and I want to hide you so they can't find you."

"Oh, mamma!"

"Hush, now! you must be a good little girl, and not cry, and not even speak to me, no matter what you hear."

"But I 'fraid Indian, mamma!"

"Then you must keep still, and they won't find you."

"Where papa?"

"Oh, would to God he were here!" cried the poor wife and mother, with a wild burst of emotion.

She then hastened to hide the child among the straw of the bed, strongly impressing it with the idea that its own constant silence, and nothing else, could save it from the hands of the wicked Indians. This done, she turned to the window, that looked in the direction where she had seen the Indians, and perceived four of them leisurely, but somewhat cautiously, approaching the house. What was she to do? Leave the door open and let them enter, trusting to her own peaceful intentions to effect a like result in them? or close and bar the house, and make the best warlike defence she could? For a few moments she was undecided which course to pursue, for there were about equally strong arguments in favor of either. Should she let them in peacefully, treat them well, and offer them a few presents, they might possibly go away without doing her any harm; or should they even kill her, or take her prisoner, seeing no one else about, they might overlook her child, and let it thus escape; and such was her maternal love, that she would have been willing to sacrifice herself to insure the safety of her offspring. On the other hand, should she bar up the door and windows, and make use of the gun and ax at her command, perhaps she could keep them out altogether, till such time as her returning husband should become apprised of the siege, who might then go and bring a force to the rescue.

Recollecting her husband's injunctions while arguing with herself, she decided upon the latter course; and in less than a minute after that, the dwelling was as secure against her enemies as it was possible for her to make it. She then took down a gun that was resting on some hooks overhead, and hastily examined it. She knew how to load and fire it, even though she might not be able to sight it well. The piece she found already loaded, and remembered having heard her husband say he had put in a large charge of buckshot; but to make doubly sure, she hastily put in some more, which she found in a leathern pouch. He had taken his favorite rifle with him, but this piece was left, and a large horn of powder, and with this in her hands, and the certainty that she had plenty of ammunition, she felt slightly relieved from that sensation of almost utter helplessness which she had a minute before experienced.

She had put in some extra shot, as we have said, and secured them with a light wad, and was in the act of repriming the piece, with hands that trembled so as to spill some of the powder on the floor, when a loud rap sounded on the door, as if it were struck with a tomahawk.

"Who is there? and what do you want?" demanded Mrs. Wells, bracing her nerves for the severe trial which she felt was now at hand.

"Me Injun—come say how do!" replied a voice, in broken English.

"Very well, you can say that where you are."

"Squaw open—Injun want come in say how do. Injun no harm."

"No, I cannot let you in; and so, if you are good and peaceable Indians, you will go away."

"No go 'way first. Come in first—say how do—eat hominy—den go 'way."

"No—I don't know you—you may be bad Indians—and so I shall not let you in; but if you are hungry, I will give you food."

"Yes, Injun heap hungry."

Mrs. Wells hastily collected some cold meat, bread and vegetables, and, cautiously opening the window-shutter, dropped them on the ground outside.

"There is food for you," she said, as she secured the shutter; "and now, if you are good Indians, you will go away."

She judged by the sounds that the savages picked up the food and ate it, and for some time she could hear them conversing in low tones among themselves.

As this affair happened at a period when the Indians were supposed to be at peace with the whites, there could be no evidence but their own actions, that the present party was hostile, and therefore Mrs. Wells began to gather strong hope that, now she had fed them, they would go quietly away and leave her in peace. But such was not their intention—whether because they were murderously inclined, or because they were a strong party against a weak, defenceless woman, and felt they could annoy, frighten and rob her with impunity, we are not prepared to say. At any rate, the spokesman soon returned to the door, and, rapping loudly on it again, said:

"Injun much thank—a heap. Open door—him say goodbye."

"You can say that just as well where you are," replied Mrs. Wells. "I have treated you well, and now, unless you are wicked Indians, you will go away peacefully."

"No," rejoined the savage, in a bolder and more threatening tone, "Injun come in."

"Once for all," said the heroic little woman, anger beginning in some measure to take the place of fear, "you shall not come in! and if you attempt it, the consequences be on your own heads!"

"What poor squaw do?" cried the savage, in a tone of insolent contempt.

"Try it and see!" was the defiant answer.

The Indian said something to his companions in their own language, and a laugh followed. This, after a brief silence, was succeeded by a fierce whoop, or yell, that seemed to strike a chill to the very heart of that poor wife and mother, and which caused the little girl, who had till now kept perfectly quiet, to start up with a scream of terror.

"Oh, Ella, you unnerve me!" exclaimed the agonized mother, springing to and clasping the child in her arms. "Now the Indians must know you are here, and if I am mastered, you will be lost. Hark!" she continued, as a succession of heavy blows fell upon the door; "the wretches are trying to cut their way in, and I must be ready for them. God help me! It is *a terrible thing to take human life; but I feel it* is my duty to save myself and this sweet innocent by every means in my power, and I will do it! Lay down, Ella, and keep quiet—mamma won't let the wicked Indians come to her darling!"

The little girl, as if she comprehended all that was required of her in that hour of terrible trial, nestled back into the straw, without uttering another word, leaving her mother free to act. The blows now fell rapidly and constantly upon the door, showing that the Indians were determined upon cutting their way in; and taking up her gun, with a firm resolve to defend herself to the last, Mrs. Wells advanced and placed herself in a position to fire upon her enemies as soon as a single opening should enable her to see them.

They worked steadily and fast, and seemingly in concert, occasionally exchanging a few words with one another, and once or twice breaking out into a light laugh, evidently showing they were not apprehensive of anything very serious. They doubtless supposed they had a poor, helpless woman in a trap, and therefore felt both courageous and careless.

With pale face, knitted brow, compressed lips, and eyes that almost glared, Mrs. Wells watched every vibration of that door under the axes of her foes; and when she perceived one particular part of the thick slabs begin to quiver and splinter and let in light, she placed the muzzle of her gun there with a firm hand, and drew back the cock with fingers that no longer trembled.

The blows now rained fast, and in less than a minute a hatchet struck through and opened an aperture some two inches by three. This success was greeted by a shout of joy, and one of the Indians put his face down to it to peer in. He never knew what he saw; for at that instant Mrs. Wells fired, and literally blew his head to atoms, scattering his brains over his laughing companions, whose sounds of merriment suddenly changed to yells of surprise, horror, rage and dismay.

Dropping their hatchets and catching up their guns, they quickly thrust the muzzles, one after the other, through the aperture, and discharged them at random into the dwelling. But the recoil of Mrs. Wells's overloaded piece had thrown her down, and she thus escaped unharmed. Getting upon her feet, she drew aside to a corner behind the door, and, with the coolness of a veteran, prepared to reload her gun, nerved to this state by the belief that on her presence of mind and physical exertions the safety of herself and child depended.

But at this moment of fearful trial she heard the crack of a distant rifle, followed by cries, or rather howls, of dismay from the savages about the door, who seemed to dash off as if from some pursuing enemy. Soon after there was another report, and another but distant yell; and while Mrs. Wells stood listening and fairly trembling now with the hope of rescue, her ears were greeted with the welcome sounds of her husband's voice. She staggered to the door, tore down the bars, threw it open, and, with a wild shriek of joy, fell fainting upon her husband's breast.

He had returned rather sooner than he expected, and just in time to see his dwelling besieged by the party of four. While creeping up for a shot, the discharge from within, and the death of one of his foes, had cheered his almost fainting spirit, by giving him one assailant less and proving the active existence of his heroic little wife. He trembled to see the Indians fire into the house; but he took advantage of the act to gain a point where he could make his own aim fatal to another. As the remaining two fled, he hastily reloaded his rifle, and had the satisfaction of wounding one of these and getting into his dwelling unharmed. His fainting wife soon revived; and father, mother and child, thus happily reunited, lived many years, to thank Heaven for their wonderful deliverance from what had threatened to be a terrible fate.

* * *

THE SMITHS AND THE JONESES.

The Smiths believe that edibles were made to eat; and that digestion is a humbug invented by the doctors; and that milk and cider, and pastry and vinegar, and candy and raisins, and flapjacks and pickles, and jellies, can be eaten in successive strata at any hour in the twenty-four, and in any condition of body or mind, and repose quietly together like "the Happy Family." The Smiths believe in getting up in the middle of the night to eat, and then going to bed upon it; they believe in taking a bath alike on a full or an empty stomach, and they utterly despise exercise. If they are sick, it is never on account of any of *these* barbaric heresies.

Now the Joneses, having studied physiology, look upon food as a necessary evil. No Rabbi could more utterly sniff down pork. Grease in every form is tabooed; preserves and pastry sent to Coventry, or only set before company, who have an undoubted right to kill themselves if fashion requires it. The Joneses, when helping you at table, always prefix the offered morsel with, pray take it, it is so healthful; or, it will assist your digestion; or, it is an excellent corrective; till the association between potatoes and physic, meat and medicine, is so intimate, that one ceases to regard these edibles in the light of food. You are cautioned against veal, because of necessity it must be *young* meat; against fish, lest it may aggravate a possible scrofulous tendency; against tea, because the leaves may have been dried on copper; against milk, because you are unacquainted with the pedigree of the cow from whence it came. Bread is microscopically inspected, for imaginary adulterations, and after all these precautions the timid Joneses, restricted down to the simplest forms of two or three permissible and monotonous eatables, swallo[illegible]n these nervously, and with an eye to the undertaker, and if attacked by headache, submit to it meekly, as a penance for some unknown infringement of nature's law.

Now the Adamses believe in *quantity*, not *quality*. An ounce of paving-stones is as good as an ounce of mutton; in other words, you may eat your grandmother with impunity, if you only confine yourself to a small piece, and are jolly over it. Luckily for butchers, confectioners, grocers, doctors and sextons, each of these hobbies finds its followers.

FANNY FERN.

* * *

NEVER GIVE UP.

Never give up, though all faint and heart-weary;
  Be the hopes thou hast buried but steps to thy will
To mount the dim future, now silent and dreary;
  Beyond hope's horizon some light lingers still.
Never give up, while the lamp of light burneth,
  Though wasted with watching be feeble its flame,
The light may suffice, ere to darkness it turneth,
  On Time's brightest record to blazon thy name.
Never give up till thine effort endue thee
  With force to o'ercome in the conflict of sin:
Never give up, though the strife still subdue thee;
  Thy spirit undaunted a blessing will win.
Never give up; though to thee be not given
  To perfect the good that thy genius hath plann'd;
Another shall strive where in vain thou hast striven;
  Another have strength in the struggle to stand!

* * *

THOUGHTS AS THEY OCCUR.—No. 108.

BY ONE WHO KEEPS HIS EYES AND EARS OPEN.

A Laughable French Miracle.

The well-known French missionary, Father Brindaine, was always poor—for the simple reason that he gave away everything that he had. One evening he asked for a night's lodging of the curate of the village through which he passed and the worthy man having only one bed shared it with him. At day-break Father Brindaine rose, according to his custom, and went to say his prayers at the neighboring church. Returning from his sacred duty, he met a beggar, who asked alms. "Alas, my friend, I have nothing!" said the good priest, mechanically putting his hand into his breeches pocket, where to his astonishment he found something hard, wrapped up in a paper, which he knew he had not left there. He hastily opened the paper, and seeing four half-crowns in it, cried out that it was a miracle. He gave the money to the beggar, and hastened to the church to return thanks to God. The curate soon after arrived there, and Father Brindaine related the miracle with the greatest unction; the curate turned pale, put his hand in his pocket, and in an instant perceived that Father Brindaine, in getting up in the dark, had taken the wrong pair of breeches; he had performed a miracle with the curate's crowns.

Capital! and true as Nature. It *must* have happened just so. I heartily enjoy that dawning surprise of disappointment of the *curate*, who had lost his pantaloons, when he slapped his hands upon his pocket! Or, if Father Brindaine was one of those holy men that have the least possible spice of waggery in their composition, and had exchanged garments with a witty unconsciousness, it is still more amusing.

But, why do I say it *must* have happened? Because it is just the thing that is going on all around us; only the humor of the thing does not seem to strike the public.

There is a great deal of wearing other people's clothes, and bestowing charity out of other people's pockets. That young man who is so free and flush with his money, spending it foolishly, rolling it away, drinking it away, gambling it away, racing it away; why should he not be free with it? It is his father's pantaloons he has got on, and his father's pocket, out of which he is spending. He laughs at a young man who will not join his extravagance as stingy, close-fisted, parsimonious. But this second young man is wearing his own pantaloons, and spends out of his own pocket; and that makes a difference.

Here is a careful man, discreet and conscientious in bestowment of money; but, then, he *earned* it. It is his own. Every dollar represents a sweat-drop. He is liberal, but not careless. But his neighbor is profuse, and a little despises this carefulness. *He* never stands upon a dollar more or less! Why should he? He has inherited his property. He spends out of his father's and his grandfather's pocket!

A man is living beyond his means. If his debts were paid he would be hopelessly bankrupt. But he staves off settlement, and lives profusely. But it is not his own pocket, but his creditors', that he puts his hand into!

There is a man, quite conspicuous for public spirit. He subscribes largely. He has much influence; is consulted; elected director of charitable societies. In the end, it turns out that he had been wearing other people's breeches. As soon as he is made to wear his own, there is less acquaintance between his hand and his pocket!

There is many a man who lives in a house which largely came from the mechanic's pocket, who was cheated in the building.

The speculator who draws his friends into wild schemes, spends money out of their pockets. The managers of schemes and stock companies have a way of getting into other people's clothes. There are hundreds of men in Wall street who are exchanging pantaloons with each other pretty much all the time. A lottery keeper has his hands in ten thousand pockets besides his own. How many grog-sellers spend out of other people's pockets. How many gamblers put their hands into the pockets of sons of honest men for uncounted sums to be spent villainously!

What if some night, in a sleep, Puck should take it into his head to hang up in a row all the other-people's-pantaloons out of which you have been spending money, good reader! What a row there would be for some of us! and of what sizes, little clothes, big clothes, and some petticoats, too, with pockets in them! Or imagine some Nemesis from Fairyland authorizing a revenge by allowing all pockets and pantaloons that had been exchanged or cheated to go forth and reclaim their dues. What extraordinary miles of pockets, what ludicrous battalions of pantaloons would escort many a knight, or besiege his house, or keep guard about his store, or sit astride his ridge-pole?

And, should this matter be pushed clear home to all cases, might not some charitable societies, who have the spending of other people's money, some revengeful day, find their society houses looking like an old Jew's shop for the avenging companies of other people's pantaloons come for their rights!

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

SIXTH AVENUE.—Black pepper and Cayenne pepper are two very different productions. Black pepper grows upon a bush native to the East Indies, but now cultivated in all tropical countries. The berries, when ripe, are of a brilliant red, and grow in clusters, like the berries of holly. Upon being gathered and dried, they shrivel and turn black, and require no other preparation for use except grinding. The berries of this description grow in great luxuriance, the clusters being numerous and large. Cayenne pepper is also a native of the oriental countries, though the plant has in modern times been cultivated in the West Indies with so much success that the best Cayenne now comes from the West Indies. The fruit of the Cayenne pepper bush is frequently larger than a hen's egg, the skin and seeds of which are pounded to a pulp and then baked hard. The cakes are ground into the red powder which we are accustomed to see in the castor. To preserve its strength it is put into bottles, which are corked and sealed. It is said that the quantity of pepper annually consumed in the world is about 12,000 tons.

H. S. M.—This correspondent is a woman, who owns a house and garden, which, she says, she had nearly paid for three years ago. At that time, however, her mother became dependent upon her, and, ever since, she has been able to pay very little upon her house and garden. She now wishes to know "whether it is her duty to take care of her mother." The woman capable of asking such a question, or even of entertaining a doubt on the subject, is not worthy of the honor of sustaining an aged mother. Should your prudential fears finally induce you to turn your mother out of doors, the house and garden will, no doubt, be a pleasant abode after that, and people will be proud to enter it, and point it out to strangers as one of the ornaments of their town, and likewise point you out as a disgrace to your sex.

PRINCETON.—Captain Ericsson is within a few months of being sixty years of age, having been born in 1803. When a young man he was a lieutenant in the Swedish army, but for the last thirty-five years he has been constantly employed in inventions. He has been a resident of New York for a quarter of a century. To your second question we regret to reply, that Captain Ericsson, whose inventions have enriched whole communities, has not derived great pecuniary advantage from his useful labors. He is, certainly, not to be reckoned among the rich men of Gotham.

DUMMY.—The Tarpeian Rock at Rome, from the summit of which criminals of state were formerly hurled, still exists. The present height of the Rock is sixty feet, and it is still precipitous enough to serve its ancient purpose. During the last 1800 years the Rock has been reduced in height by the action of earthquakes, and by the accumulation of ruins at its base. Some travellers are of opinion that in the palmy days of Rome the Tarpeian Rock was not less than one hundred feet high.

LEDGER LOVER.—It is not necessary to thank a young lady for the pleasure of her company to a ball, or any such place, in any formal or set phrase, or, in fact, in any phrase at all. You signify your pleasure sufficiently by accompanying her, and by showing the most polite and cordial attention to and respect for all her wishes.

ODDNEY.—When a gentleman enters a room with his hat in his hand, shall a lady offer to take it? No. It is a relief to some awkward persons to have some employment for their fingers. If he chooses to bring his hat into the parlor instead of leaving it in the hall, take no notice of it; let him twiddle it in his fingers if he pleases.

MARION writes to us that his heart is set upon a young lady, whose mother will not allow him to associate with her on account of his smoking. "What shall I do?" asks Marion. If your liking for your pipe or cigar is stronger than your love for the lady, it is well she should know it before it becomes too late to be remedied.

GRANVILLE.—"How much will a diamond cost as big around as a ten-cent piece?" The Pitt diamond is about that size, and the King of France, a great many years ago, paid half a million dollars for it. Perhaps, it could now be bought for twice that sum. Address Napoleon III., and ask him his lowest cash price.

C. A. M.—It *would* be proper for a young lady to invite a gentleman who called on her to call again, if he *was a gentleman* and she wished him to repeat his call. No gentleman ever "boasts" of such a civility, or indeed of any favor granted him by a lady.

JACKSON.—There is not the least reasonable doubt that Gen. Andrew Jackson was born in what is now Union County, North Carolina, on the 15th of March, 1767. The matter has been fully investigated, and the facts established.

SIMON.—Haliburton, the author of Sam Slick, is now an English judge and member of Parliament. Sam Slick is now very difficult to procure, as it is out of print in this country.

L. T. C.—There is a great deal in Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations upon the subject of taxation. His leading maxims on the subject may be, however, compressed into a few lines. He says: 1. That every man should contribute to the support of government in proportion to his ability, and every system of taxation should be based on that principle; 2. That every tax should be defined with the utmost possible exactness, so as to leave nothing to the arbitrary judgment of the tax-gatherer; 3. That taxes should be made payable at the times and places most convenient to the tax-payer; 4. That such taxes should be imposed as can be collected with the least expense to the government and the least annoyance to the people. These maxims are now too obviously true for argument, but, in the days of Adam Smith, they were novel and enlightening generalizations. In fact, so many of Adam Smith's opinions have been adopted by modern governments, that his work may be compared to a huge battering-ram which has knocked down the enemy's walls, and yet continues to swing in the air.

CARLOS.—The following is all we know of the British ironplated, steam frigate Warrior: Length, 380 feet; breadth, 58 feet; depth, 41 feet six inches; tonnage, 6,177; horse-power of engines, 2,600; stowage for 950 tons of coal. She is covered with iron plates, four and a half inches thick; each plate being fifteen feet long by four wide. The plates begin at a line five feet below the water, and extend to the top of the bulwarks. The bow and stern are plated with much thinner iron, to prevent straining; but those parts are strengthened by several water-tight compartments; so that if she is stove by a shot she will not be sunk. The timber hull is formed of teak, two feet thick. The deck is completely covered in, and there are lines of telegraph running to every part of the vessel, and connected with the captain's post in action. Her armament consists of Armstrong hundred-pounders. The total cost of the frigate has been about one million eight hundred thousand dollars. The British government has now fifteen similar vessels, either finished, finishing, or just begun.

FIVE YEARS' READER.—The cholera of 1832 went nearly round the world. It ravaged some parts of Asia in 1830; in 1831, it swept over Europe, from Turkey to Scotland; in 1832, it crossed the Atlantic, and desolated America. Its course in the United States is vividly remembered by a multitude of persons still living. On the eighth or ninth of June, 1832, an emigrant ship arrived at Quebec, having lost on her passage from Liverpool forty-two passengers by cholera. The next day the disease broke out in the town. Three days later it was in Montreal. In fifteen days it began its ravages in the city of New York, where, in six weeks, 2565 persons died of it. As it subsided here, it spread southward, until most of the large southern towns had had it. About the middle of November it ceased its ravages.

J. D. M.—This correspondent, who seems to be in a state of high perturbation, says: "I am in love with a young lady whom my family do not think good enough for me. Shall I stick to her, or give her up?" Was there ever a young man in love or engaged, whose "family" thought his lady love "good enough?" If so, we should like to know it. If you postpone your marriage or courtship till all your relations shall become satisfied with your chosen one, you may wait a long while. As the young lady is to be *your* wife, not theirs, you are the party most interested, and you are the party who should give the casting and *final* vote on the question. A decent respect, however, for the opinions of those to whom your welfare is dear, should be exhibited in all such matters.

FULTON.—The case you refer to, is by no means an isolated one. When a great success is achieved, many people are certain to start up as claimants for the honor, who would never have been heard from had the experiment or invention proved a failure. It always reminds us of the little four-year-old urchin, who boasted that "he and grandpapa killed an enormous rat;" and when questioned as to what part he took in the massacre, replied that he *handed the shovel for grandpa to kill him!* Honor to whom honor is due, in all cases; but let all unprincipled filchers of laurels, hardly won by modest merit, meet with their just deserts.

H. W. H.—"While walking with a lady in the street, should the lady always walk on the side of the pavement nearest the houses?" asks this young gentleman. In European towns, yes; for there the streets are usually so narrow that the sidewalk is little wider than is required for two persons to walk abreast, and, consequently, the lady should always take the inside, so as to be safer from the mud of the vehicles passing. In American towns, spacious and clean as they usually are, it is seldom of any consequence on which side the lady walks. If, however, there is a choice, give her the best and pleasantest place.

ST. JOHN.—Vessels drawing ten feet of water can ascend the James river to a point one mile below Richmond, and vessels drawing fifteen feet can generally get within three miles of that city. Richmond has a population of about 38,000. It is a town of the first importance to the rebels, on account of its furnaces and manufactories. In reply to your third question, we may say, that Richmond must be defended, if defended at all, at a distance of several miles from the city. Perhaps, before these lines reach you, events will have answered your inquiry

NED.—The flute, or an instrument resembling it, is probably the most ancient of all musical instruments. It is mentioned by the most ancient authors whose writings are preserved. The flute in its present form, commonly called the German flute, is a modern improvement upon the flutes of antiquity, and was introduced about the year 1710. It differs from the ancient flutes in having a much greater compass, in the addition of finger keys, and in being blown into by a more oval hole in the side without any mouth-piece.

PORTFOLIO.—You are not the first girl who has discovered too late the danger of playing with fire. For a young lady to amuse herself by writing anonymous letters to gentlemen may seem, at first, very good fun, and quite safe. You have now found out that it may lead to very disagreeable embarrassments. Take warning by your mishap, and avoid such perilous nonsense in future. It is a good rule for men and women, for young and old: Do nothing that requires artifice and concealment.

REWARD.—This correspondent says, "I have been in the habit of waiting upon a lady for some months past, whom I do not wish to marry, whom I do not wish to deprive of *other* matrimonial offers, whose society—let me do my best—I cannot keep away from, and whom" (oh! wonderful conceit) "I do not consider unworthy of my hand. What shall I do, in this unfortunate dilemma?" You are simply a fool, and it would undoubtedly make very little difference to the lady what course you might take.

THE SECRET CYPHER.—We have received a bushel or so of letters from our readers, in regard to the "puzzle" at the end of the first instalment of the popular story we are now publishing, entitled, "The Secret Cypher," &c. Some of our correspondents have solved the "mystery," but others come wide of the mark. In this number of the LEDGER the riddle is explained by Judah Murdock.

T. V.—Our esteemed contributor, George D. Prentice, Esq., is *not* "the same man as General Prentiss the commander of Union forces in the West," but the far-famed editor of the Louisville Journal, whose incisive satire is more piercing than sword or bayonet, and whose editorial broadsides are as much dreaded by the rebels as those of Commodore Foote's gunboats.

JEAN.—The great fire of London, which occurred in September, 1666, raged for three days and nights, laid waste 400 streets and 436 acres of ground, and consumed 89 churches and 13,200 houses. The great fire of New York of December, 1835, devastated 52 acres and burned 528 houses. So, you see, there is "some comparison" between the two calamities.

ABE.—You say that you are very much in love with a young lady, whom you often accompany home from some place, but who never invites you to call. That is no sign that she would not like you to do so. Love is timid. Why not call without a formal invitation? If you were well received you could repeat the experiment.

LEDGER.—If your parents wish to break off an engagement between you and a lady, because she is not wealthy, you have only to make up your mind whether it is right for you to do evil that a doubtful good may come, i. e., break a solemn promise, made in good faith, for such a reason as the one assigned.

FRANKLIN.—You must be a person of queer taste and queerer principles to debate the question of marrying a girl who has a habit of swearing, and also has two girl associates of whom you do not approve. Profanity in a man is unbearable; in a woman it is disgusting and horrible.

R.—When a lady driving, alights to tie her horse, it might be proper, and it might be improper, for a strange gentleman to offer to tie it for her. It would depend upon the *manner* in which he made the offer. If respectfully done, we see no impropriety in it.

SHOTA.—You did perfectly right to decline the company of a lady who received, with equal courtesy with yourself, a man who had been proved to be a liar and a scoundrel.

C. M.—If you do not desire the attentions of a gentleman, you should not see him when he calls, especially if he has no delicacy about intruding upon you.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*